

# IN THESE TIMES

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## SOUTH AFRICA

**Election and intervention**

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**Pass laws live on**

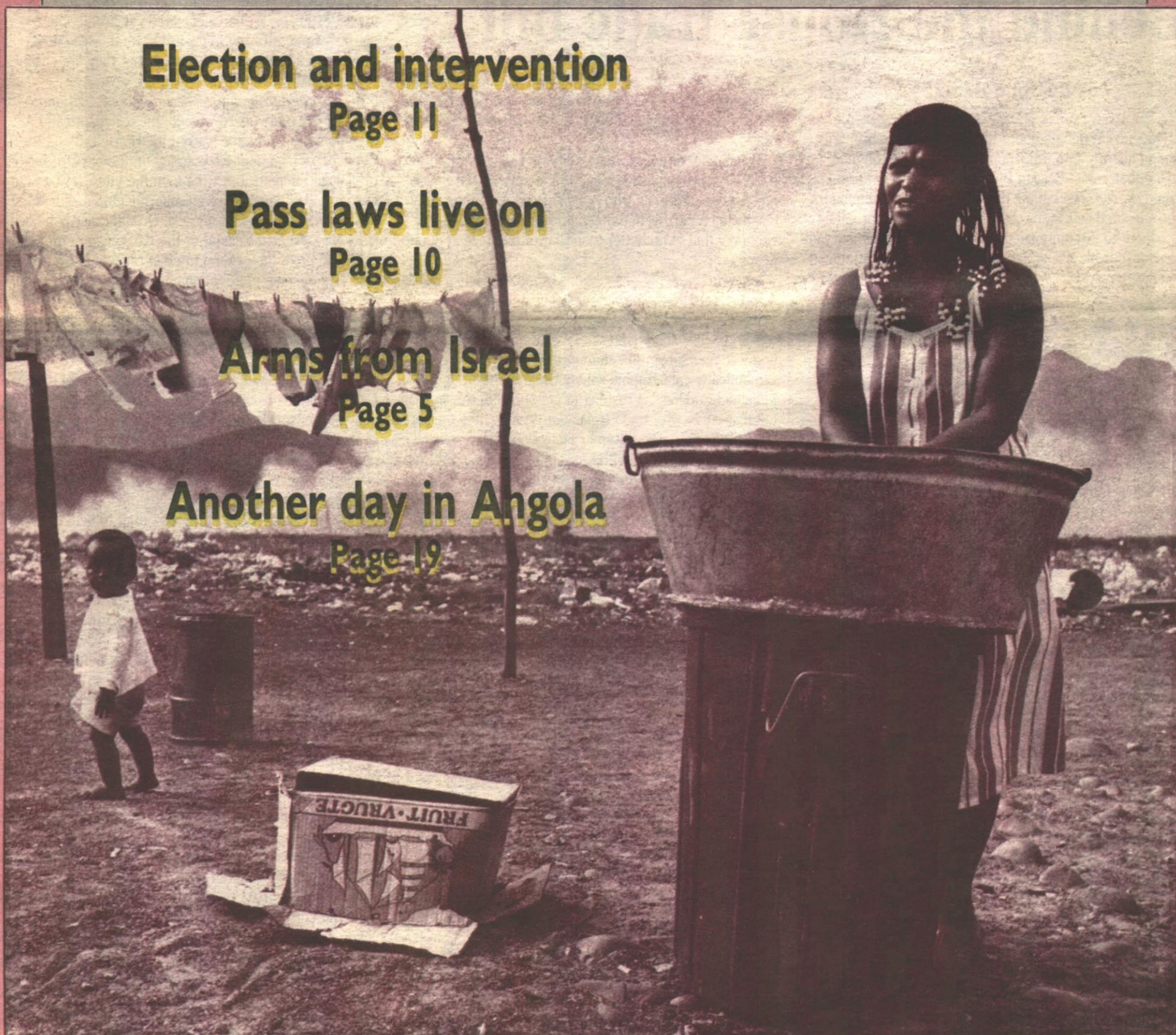
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**Arms from Israel**

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Orde Eliason Impact Visuals





# Behind the House trade bill

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The current debate about trade sanctions is primarily among liberals, and it bears directly on the economic policy that a post-Reagan Democratic administration would pursue. The debate has focused on the administration's belated retaliation against the Japanese for failing to adhere to last summer's semiconductor agreement and the House trade bill, which includes the Gephardt amend-

## INSIDE STORY

ment. Adopted April 29 against Democratic as well as Republican opposition, it would force the administration to retaliate against countries that achieve huge trade surpluses through "a pattern of unfair trade practices."

Proponents of strong trade action against the Japanese include presidential candidate Rep. Richard Gephardt (D-MO) and other Rust Belt Democrats and the AFL-CIO. Leading opponents include liberal congressmen like Rep. Mel Levine (D-CA) and Rep. Don Bonker (D-WA), newspapers like the *Washington Post*, liberal columnists like the *Post's* David Broder and the *New York Times's* Anthony

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Lewis, former Carter administration officials Stuart Eizenstat, Pat Caddell, Greg Schneiders and Hodding Carter and presidential candidates Gary Hart and Bruce Babbitt.

This lineup of liberal against liberal suggests that there must be merit to both sides of the argument, but that is not the case. Liberals who oppose trade sanctions are displaying a narrow and dogmatic view of international economy that is no better than that of the Reagan Republicans.

Liberal opponents of sanctions brand the House bill as "protectionist" and as an expression of "special interests." They argue that adopting sanctions will cause a trade war and a '30s-style depression. "The president has announced a small set of economically meaningless but symbolically catastrophic sanctions, and a thoroughly buffaloes Congress is rushing to get ahead of the special-interest curve with trade legislation that ignores the lessons of the early '30s," former State Department official Hodding Carter wrote in the April 23 *Wall Street Journal*.

Liberals also argue that the real cause of the nation's \$170 billion trade deficit is not other countries' unfair trade practices, but American budget deficits, consumption patterns and industrial incompetence. Instead of trade sanctions, liberals like Carter propose austerity, while others like the *Times's* Lewis propose "planning, that dread word in our political orthodoxy."

These liberal positions are based on several erroneous assumptions about the Japanese and world economy:

- *American trade action will cause a trade war.* In demanding that the Japanese—or the South Koreans—open their markets to American goods the U.S. is bargaining from a position of strength, since Japan sells far more goods in the U.S. than the U.S. sells there. Indeed, the initial result of the administration's sanctions against Japanese electronic firms has been a sudden Japanese willingness to buy Cray supercomputers and to allow American firms to bid on the \$25-billion Osaka Bay project.

- *The House Trade bill and the administration sanctions are protectionist.* Protectionist bills like the infamous 1930 Smoot-Hawley tariff protected American firms against foreign competition by raising the price of foreign goods above their market value. The purpose of the administration sanctions and the Gephardt amendment is to open foreign markets that have been closed and to prevent Japanese firms from winning American market shares by selling their goods here below cost, while they enjoy protected sales at home.

- *These trade sanctions could precipitate a depression.* Two leading causes of international economic instability are the Third World debt burden and global overcapacity in products like steel, ships, petrochemicals and textiles. What aggravates the latter is countries like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore that produce primarily for

export rather than for their internal market, while protecting their internal market from competition. If they were to increase domestic consumption by raising their workers' standard of living and open their markets to foreign products, almost everyone would benefit. The House Trade bill would help pressure countries to develop internal markets for their own, as well as American, goods.

- *Industrial policy and/or reduced budget deficits are the only solutions to American trade deficits.* To eliminate the entire \$170-billion trade deficit, the U.S. will not only have to reduce the deficit but also improve productivity. But better goods at lower prices will still not necessarily sell in Japan, where informal practices prevent American goods from being purchased. Harvard Japan expert Ezra Vogel writes, "It is common for approval of superior foreign products to be delayed by Japanese customs officials and for foreign companies to be given vague, negative responses to requests for approvals without any explanation. Frequently, approvals of foreign products are delayed until Japanese companies have products that are competitive—often copied from foreign products—and beginning to establish their own beachhead."

Gephardt estimates that by eliminating unfair trade practices the U.S. can reduce its trade deficit by 15 to 20 percent. Hart, who opposes the trade bill, estimates 10 to 15 percent, but of course 10 percent of \$170 billion, the lowest estimate, is equivalent to the salary of about 600,000 workers or the budget of several large cities. Trade sanctions are not a panacea, but they are hardly "economically meaningless."

- *The House trade bill is special-interest legislation.* There is a paradox here. Indeed, the legislators and AFL-CIO lobbyists who have backed the House bill and the Gephardt amendment were acting on the basis of regional or special interests, but what is in the interest of a South Carolina textile worker or a California chip maker is, in this case, in the general interest. On the other hand, what Gary Hart, Stuart Eizenstat or the *Washington Post* perceives to be in the general interest reflects at best the interests of some multinationals and American importers and at worst those of the Japanese, well represented in the U.S. by a corps of lobbyists and public relations flacks drawn from former employment in the White House trade office.

Liberals like Hodding Carter or Hobart Rowen balk at trade sanctions because they are still held captive by the view of the world promulgated by the policy-making elite of the '40s and '50s. These policy-makers were rightly obsessed with the lessons of the '20s and '30s. They wanted to create open markets overseas on the assumption that American products could compete effectively against any other, but they also wanted to help the defeated powers reconstruct their economies.

They created a system dogmatically laissez-faire in its ideology, but diverse in its forms of capitalism. And they insisted upon seeing Japan as simply another market society rather than as what political scientist Chalmers Johnson calls a "developmental state."

These policy-makers drew a sharp distinction between friends (the "free world") and enemies (the "Communist world"), and also resisted taking friendly actions toward presumed enemies or hostile actions toward friends. As Stanford political scientist Stephen D. Krasner argues in *Political Science Quarterly*, "The precept that a country has permanent interests but not permanent friends is profoundly antithetical to the American perspective."

Thus the policy-making elite has interpreted trade sanctions against the Japanese as acts of war that could both create a depression and destroy the free world alliance. These assumptions about the world—shared by politicians from Gary Hart to Jack Kemp and policy-makers from the Carter administration's Fred Bergsten to the Nixon and Ford administration's Herbert Stein—reflect the priorities and prejudices of a bygone area. They are of as little use in understanding American relations with Japan as they are in understanding American relations with the Soviet Union or China.

This is not to say that Gephardt and the AFL-CIO are always on the side of the angels, but on this issue of trade and jobs—which could dominate the Democratic primaries and the general election—they represent the long-term interests of the nation, while Hart, Babbitt and Carter do not.



By Dave Lindorff

NEW YORK

## Meese linked to a growing scandal that's been obscured by Irangate

FOR MONTHS THE NATIONAL MEDIA HAVE been dominated by news of the contragate scandal, as journalists and federal investigators try to discover how much President Reagan was involved in the illegalities being unearthed, and whether there was a cover-up.

In New York, however, reports about contra funding scandals are often shunted aside by news about the city's own scandals—actually a miasma of corruption (see *In These Times*, Feb. 25) that has seen almost every major city official in the administration of Mayor Ed Koch indicted for something or other, and that now has put the whole state legislature under a cloud.

The New York corruption stories have tended to be parochial, though the first break, when a borough president under investigation by the FBI tried first unsuccessfully and then successfully to kill himself with a kitchen knife, did prove titillating enough to warrant national coverage. Now, however, as the result of a relatively minor investigation into bribery of public officials by a Bronx firm, investigators have begun to stumble on links to Washington.

The New York corruption and bribery scandal has finally gone national, where it promises to further damage the already foundering Reagan administration. In the days of Watergate, journalists and investigators were advised to "follow the money." In this case, the money leads to the office of one-time presidential counsel and now Attorney General Edwin Meese III.

The key to this change of stage is Wedtech, a \$100-million-a-year defense contractor based in the South Bronx. Just over a decade ago, Wedtech was just a glorified machine shop with big ideas. Then in 1975 its owners hit on the scheme of entering a Small Business Administration program for minority businesses that allowed it to gain federal contracts without having to engage in competitive bidding. By 1986 the company had "won" some \$250 million in defense contracts. With 1,500 employees at work, the company was being hailed as a major success story in a borough whose name has become almost synonymous with blight and despair.

The idea of a minority-owned business doing that well, especially one from the South Bronx, seemed almost too good to be true, and it turns out it was. In fact, the minority officers who qualified Wedtech for the special SBA program were figureheads. And according to federal prosecutors, what really gave the little company its edge was a penchant for bribery and a canny knowledge of who had the power to steer contracts its way.

Last December, as city, state and federal investigators pored over the company's books, Wedtech filed for protection under Chapter 11 of the nation's bankruptcy law, and promptly laid off its entire workforce. In February four top company executives pleaded guilty to filing false invoices to the government. At the same time, they told federal prosecutors they had, over the years, paid bribes to some 200 government officials, including two Congress members. Indictments are expected soon.

**Anatomy of a scandal:** Originally, the investigation of Wedtech's activities came as a spin-off of a probe of municipal corrup-

tion in New York by Manhattan federal prosecutor Rudolph Giuliani. But on February 2 a three-judge Appellate Court panel in Washington named a special prosecutor, Washington attorney James C. McKay, to investigate the lobbying activities of presidential aide Lynn Nofziger. But as soon as McKay began his work, which included examining Nofziger's efforts on behalf of Wedtech, it became clear that as early as 1981 (the first year of the Reagan administration) the company had an inside track at the White House, well greased with cash, through the offices of then presidential aide Meese.

McKay and his staff have learned that Wedtech in 1981 provided at least \$500,000 in company stock to E. Robert Wallach, a personal friend and attorney to Meese. Wallach in turn lobbied Meese and his assistant James Jenkins, ultimately winning a \$28-million Army contract for small gas engines. The Army had not believed Wedtech could meet its specifications but awarded the contract anyway after a briefing at the White House arranged by Jenkins. Jenkins later left the White House to work for Wedtech as director of marketing in Washington.

Now U.S. attorney general, Meese, like the president in the case of the contra funding scandal, has "memory problems" in the Wedtech case. Last November his office told reporters looking into the story that he did not recall ever discussing Wedtech with Wallach. At a December news conference he admitted that he had heard of the company—that it was an "outstanding small-business success story"—but he declined further comment. On April 6, however, at another press conference, Meese conceded that he had received "a half-dozen memos" about Wedtech from Wallach, complaining that the company "was not getting fair treatment from the Army."

Meese said, "I believe I may have referred it to the cabinet affairs office to try to make sure that they did get a fair hearing," adding that "none of the things that we did would be any different for Mr. Wallach than we would for any other representative of a company." (Close observers of the Reagan administration over the past six years will have no trouble believing this statement.)

But even this latest account seems to be less than candid. Federal prosecutors looking into the Wedtech scandal now say they are investigating the allegedly "blind trust" into which Meese placed a reported \$60,000 in financial assets upon becoming attorney general in 1985. The manager of that fund, W. Franklin Chinn, a San Francisco financial consultant and president of Financial Management International, Inc., was that same year named to Wedtech's board of directors, and held at the time a substantial stake in the company.

Last February Meese flatly denied that he had any financial interest in Wedtech. But on April 16 a far more circumspect statement was issued by the attorney general's official spokesman, Terry Eastland, saying only that Meese's investments were held in a blind



Attorney General Edwin Meese

trust, and that he did not know of any specific investments made for him by Chinn. (Chinn was forced to resign from the Wedtech board two months ago when new management, installed after bankruptcy proceedings were initiated, discovered possible irregularities in consulting fees paid to him by the company.)

Meese, through Eastland, backed even further off this position last week when his spokesman said that at the time the attorney general established an investment fund with Chinn he "did understand that Chinn had a Wedtech connection."

There is considerable evidence that Meese knew his office's involvement with the com-

### It becomes increasingly difficult to believe the attorney general's pleas of ignorance.

pany was controversial. On April 25 the *New York Times* reported that McKay's office has obtained copies of memos sent from then White House counsel Fred Fielding to Meese's office in 1981 and 1982, warning Meese's aides not to intervene on behalf of Wedtech contracts. And Meese's attorney Wallach, who introduced the attorney general to Chinn, says he had informed Meese of the financial manager's links to the company. It becomes increasingly difficult to believe Meese's pleas of ignorance.

To date, the Wedtech scandal has been shunted aside in the nation's news media, overwhelmed by the contragate scandal, and probably also by the fact that tales of greed-run-amok in the Reagan administration have been so commonplace as to evoke yawns from editors and readers alike. Yet as one congressional source observes, "If it weren't for contragate, this would be a very serious scandal."

**Change of story:** Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH), a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, is reportedly looking into the possibility of a Senate probe into

Meese's activities on behalf of Wedtech. As one Senate staffer stated, "There are a lot of things Meese is now saying to the press about his relationship to the company that he didn't mention during several sessions before the Judiciary Committee, including his confirmation hearing."

Two FBI agents recently questioned Meese about his knowledge of "Wedtech matters," according to a Meese spokesman. It is unclear who dispatched the agents—one from New York and one from Washington—but a source in special prosecutor McKay's office coyly refused to deny that McKay had requested the interview. Whether Meese is now a target of the McKay probe is a subject of some speculation and legal debate. Under the Ethics in Government Act—currently under constitutional challenge—special prosecutors may investigate only areas within their specific court mandate. In McKay's case, this was "any violation involving Nofziger."

Some legal authorities suggest that a special prosecutor may legally follow any leads resulting from investigations it conducts. Others say someone—the attorney general, the Judiciary Committee or the special prosecutor himself—would have to request an expanded mandate from the court panel.

No such request has been made, but congressional sources say the idea is being discussed by some Senate Judiciary Committee members, and conversations with federal prosecutors, including those in McKay's office, suggest that the subject is being discussed seriously there as well.

Peter Smith, a staff aide to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman (and presidential aspirant) Joseph Biden (D-DE), has said, "We are exploring ways to ensure that the matter receives the most thorough and appropriate investigation."

At this point, no one has charged Meese with bribery or influence-peddling in the Wedtech case, but revelations about Wedtech cash flowing to two of his closest aides, as well as his financial adviser, bring the scandal very near indeed to one of President Reagan's closest confidants.

Should Meese be linked financially to Wedtech, or be found to have lied under oath to a Senate Committee, it would be a major scandal for the already scandal-plagued White House. Only one sitting cabinet officer has ever been indicted, and that is former Reagan administration Labor Secretary Raymond Donovan, whose trial in Bronx Supreme Court on charges of fraud is nearing its conclusion.

Meanwhile, the McKay probe, which has really only just begun, and related Wedtech investigations by Federal Prosecutor Giuliani, promise to dog the administration for the rest of its remaining 21 months, even if the contra-funding scandal fades with time. The investigations also drive another nail into the coffin of any dreams Meese and his conservative backers may have had of his becoming ensconced on the Supreme Court. □

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# INSHORT

By Joel Bleifuss

## Capitalism with syrup

"Maple syrup prices soar as production sags for a second year," read a recent headline in the *Wall Street Journal*. Yes, maple syrup now costs about 35 percent more than it did a year ago. A spokesman for Zabar's, an upscale New York deli, describes syrup prices as "atrocious." A farmer in Vermont reports that his maple trees are producing only 1,200 gallons of syrup compared to the normal 4,200. There you have it, *Wall Street's* view of the forces of the market interacting with the forces of nature—a warmer-than-normal spring and acid rain. Wrote the *Journal*: "Maple-tree die-off from acid rain again put a big dent in the syrup supply."

## The "self-described" orgasm

There is an age-old tradition. Following the steps of the Catholic orders, the Puritans and the Shakers, the Women Against Sexuality (WAS) have decided that fleshly pleasures corrupt. WAS is a North Carolina collective that describes itself as "political, celibate and women-loving." Last month in New York City the group nailed their thesis—"Dismantling the Practice of Sexuality"—to the agenda of a conference titled "The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism." The group states, "Since we believe that the practice of sexuality politically subordinates women, we believe that the entire practice must be dismantled. Though we recognize that many women, including WAS members, have had self-described affirmative sexual experiences, we believe that this was in spite of, and not because, the experiences were sexual."

## Elliott Abrams flexes his tongue

Assistant Secretary of State for Hemispheric Affairs Elliott Abrams turned his lidless gaze to Indianapolis, Ind., last month and spied trouble. The Hoosier capital is going to host the Pan-American Games in 1988, and that means Cubans in the U.S. So, as the Indianapolis organizers of the event were set to fly to Cuba to discuss the 1988 games (which will be held in 1991 in Cuba) with the infidel Castro, Abrams appeared with these words of warning. "He is one of the bloodiest and most ruthless dictators on the face of the earth," Abrams told *Indianapolis Star* reporters that he briefed the games organizers "about what they might expect when they get to Havana" and "gave them some material that described the human rights situation in Cuba and urged them to read it but not take it into Cuba with them because that would be overly provocative." Abrams was also worried that Castro himself might attend the Pan-American Games and wanted it made clear that "an invitation for a head of state would have to come from the government, and we are obviously not going to invite Fidel Castro to come to the U.S." Why all the fuss? Abrams explained all with this serpentine rationale: "I think what is happening is that the government of Cuba is trying to use these games for its political purpose. We've got to make sure that we as Americans don't let that happen... This is an athletic competition."

## All trashed out and nowhere to go

The tiny Central American country of Belize became the second nation to reject the 3,186 one-ton bales of wandering New York garbage (see *In These Times*, April 29). Zack Nauth of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* sends this update: The high-profile, high-potency load from Islip, New York—containing such commercial wastes as discarded, potentially infectious medical supplies—cannot find a final resting place in locales that have long been home to many a toxic waste, deadly pesticide or banned pharmaceutical. Belize, like Mexico, sent its defense forces to repel the invasion by the unarmed, uncovered, fly-infested garbage scow. Earlier last month four Mexican navy boats, a helicopter, two planes and about 200 Mexican troops patrolled the coast near Campeche and Veracruz states to ward off the oncoming barge. Turned away by Mexico, the garbage dealers had negotiated with a group of Belize investors who wanted to build a methane plant there. A government official said the investors forgot to mention, however, that accepting the garbage was part of the plan. "The idea of us buying the garbage is laughable," said Manuel Romero, Belize's chief government information officer. A second offer then came from Louisiana where a sympathetic incinerator owner volunteered to burn the garbage—bed pans and all—as a public service at 2,300 degrees Fahrenheit. Gov. Edwin W. Edwards, facing a

# WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?



It may not be very long before these headlines land on your breakfast table. Our opposition parties hold 36% of the seats in Nicaragua's national assembly —

**Adverts for the movement:** The Central American Education Project (CAEP) is taking on the Reagan administration with Madison Avenue advertising techniques. Gleen Ruga, a graphic artist and one of CAEP's founders, explains the rationale behind the volunteer ad agency this way: "People are used to seeing not very professionally produced literature on Central America. But if people were to see professionally produced ads in the media they would take the issue much more seriously. It would give the issues more credibility in the public's eye, especially a public that is used to getting so much of its information through the media and through advertising." CAEP has recently produced one TV, two radio and three newspaper ads. If you or your organization is interested in CAEP's project, write for a free brochure or send \$5—for a sample ad packet that includes a price list/order form and media guide—to CAEP, 47 East Street, Hadley, MA 01035.

## Contras kill freedom fighter

*I plan to keep working in progressive Third World countries a while longer, like many more years. Even though I often want to throw in the towel, overwhelmed with the problems of work and life, it's not often that one can say one is doing the right thing. I know I am. Somehow I will overcome the problems and pressures.*

—Benjamin Linder  
(1959-1987)

Last week in northern Nicaragua the U.S.-backed contras claimed Benjamin Linder as their first North American victim. Linder, a 27-year-old Oregon native, was killed by contra grenades on April 28 as he was planning a hydroelectric dam in rural Jinotega province. The contras also killed two Nicaraguans, Paulo Rosales and Sergio Hernandez. Linder, a mechanical engineer, had been working since 1983 with a group called the Nicaragua Appropriate Technology Project (NICAT) to help bring electricity to rural Nicaragua.

Friends described Linder as deeply committed to helping people. One associate, Peter Stricher, recalled that Linder juggled and rode a unicycle to entertain Nicaraguan children. Stricher told *In These Times* that Linder knew he was in danger from the contras, but believed that "if he was to be intimidated by them, they would have won the battle."

In 1986 Linder had been a plaintiff in a lawsuit brought against the U.S. government by the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) that argued that by supporting the contras, the government was putting Linder and other U.S. citizens working in Nicaragua in imminent danger. The suit was dismissed last February on the grounds that it was a political question not appropriate for the courts. CCR is appealing the decision.

The contras have been stepping up their attacks recently, apparently in an effort to convince Congress they are an effective fighting force. And reportedly they have been working under closer supervision by the CIA, which has directed them to attack specific electric installations as well as other economic targets.

Six development workers from Western Europe were killed last year in contra attacks. The contras have said that they consider development workers military targets. Reed Brody, a lawyer for CCR, told *In These Times*, "In the spring of 1986 the contras made a tactical decision that it was worth the one or two days of negative publicity in order to stem the flow of foreign workers into Nicaragua."

In March, an electrical project that Linder had worked on was attacked by contras, but was successfully defended by militia members, said Tom Voorhees, who worked with Linder in NICAT. "They failed to get Ben's project, so they got

Ben," he said.

The U.S. State Department tried to shift the blame by noting that a "travel advisory" was in effect for Nicaragua. And, a spokesman for the contra group UNO told *In These Times*, "It's a fact that Sandinista special forces sometimes dress up as resistance fighters and commit atrocities."

Linder had reportedly heard that his project was a contra target. In November 1985, in a letter to his friend and associate, Peter Stricher, Linder wrote, "Last month the 16-year-old sister of one of the workers was kidnapped by the contras... After 16 days she escaped and came back with the message to her brother and the other workers on the project...that they are in the contras' sights." Linder noted that he had not been mentioned and said this was "a little comforting."

According to Witness For Peace, however, a group that monitors contra attacks, less than two weeks before his death Linder expressed fear that he was a specific target of the contras.

NICAT's Tom Voorhees said he believed Linder's murder to be part of an effort to intimidate development workers, an effort Voorhees linked to recent FBI harassment of TECNICA volunteers (see *In These Times*, April 22). But, he said, Linder's death would not stop NICAT's work in Nicaragua. "We've already had several people volunteer to take his place."

—Jim Naureckas

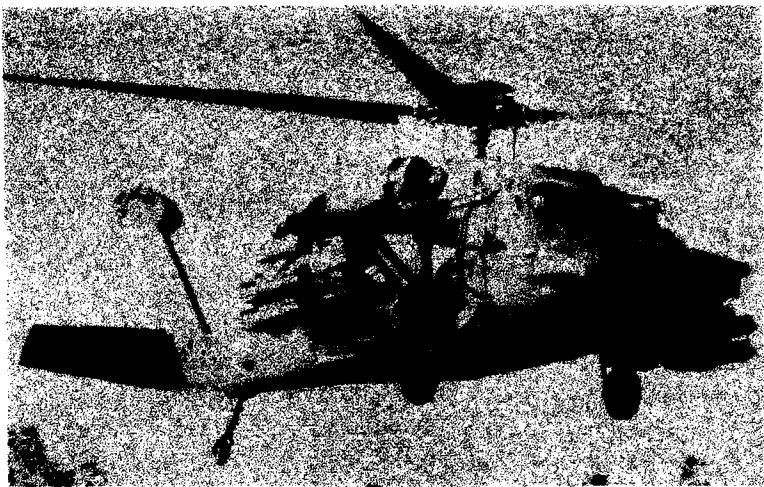


## Israel tops list of South African arms embargo violators

The State Department submitted a report to Congress last month detailing violations of the U.S. embargo on arms to South Africa. The classified report, mandated by the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986, identifies several nations that face a potential termination of U.S. aid for having provided South Africa with arms and military technology. According to press reports, Israel tops the list that also includes NATO members France, Britain, West Germany and Italy.

But Israel's arms relationship with South Africa is qualitatively different from those of the NATO countries, according to Jane Hunter, editor of the small monthly *Israeli Foreign Affairs*. The European countries have avoided direct arms treaties with South Africa but have allowed private companies to contract for military-related services. Israel, on the other hand, has direct government-to-government provisions, Hunter said.

In its arms agreement, Israel over the past year has provided South Africa with 50 Gazelle helicopters, upgraded the capacity of that country's "Cheetah" fighter-bomber and provided at least two Boeing 707s that serve as both electronic warfare platforms and refueling craft, giving South Africa an airborne



strike capacity throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.

But the ties between Israel and South Africa go deeper than simply supplying weapons systems and military equipment, said Hunter.

"It involves a very symbiotic set-up whereby South Africa plies money—of which it had a great abundance until recently—into the Israeli research-and-development phase of weapons production. The Israelis then share with the South Africans whatever the technological achievement of that match has been.

"Bowing to U.S. pressure, the Israeli government finally announced this year that it would not make any new arms agreements with South Africa and [that it would let its existing contracts lapse]. But that announcement turned out to be a red herring that will allow Israel to continue supplying arms to the apartheid government well into the next century while placating congress-

sional critics today," said Hunter.

The Israelis, according to Hunter, began to backtrack on their offer almost immediately by arguing that allowing their current contracts to lapse would thrust them into many very expensive lawsuits and throw thousands of Israelis out of work.

"In late January," Hunter said, "Israeli Defense Minister [Yitzhak] Rabin went to South Africa. It was first portrayed as a visit to tell the South Africans to keep a low profile, and that this was going to be used as a gesture to Congress to show that Israel was winding down its affairs with South Africa."

Then on March 20 the Israeli daily *Haaretz* reported that Rabin had signed military contracts with South Africa that would last into the 21st century. Consequently, said Hunter, Israel is now free to say it is going to let its existing contracts lapse and not sign any new ones.

—Robert Knight  
Dennis Bernstein & Howard Levine

## Simpson-Rodino's disappearing immigrant trick: out of sight, out of mind

GUATEMALA CITY—Seated in a one-room house in one of Guatemala City's poor working-class neighborhoods, Olga De Valenzuela, a 34-year-old mother of three, nurses her 10-month-old infant girl.

"My husband was desperate because he supports the family on a \$2-a-day salary he earned here as a bus driver," says Olga, "so he went to live with my brother in Santa Ana, Calif., last year to find work."

"Now he sends \$100 a month and even that's barely enough for us to get by. God only knows what we'll do if they deport him."

Olga and her children represent just one of the thousands of Guatemalan families whose relatives face deportation from the U.S. under the new Simpson-Rodino Immigration Law.

The law, which took effect May 5, will crack down on U.S. businesses employing illegal aliens. It could lead to the deportation of millions of undocumented foreigners.

While the prospect of massive deportations of Guatemalans raises panic here among families who live

off their relatives' earnings, Guatemalan officials, like their counterparts in other Latin American governments, fear potential economic and social havoc.

Feeding these fears is the economic crisis that grips Guatemala. Industry is running at half of its installed capacity and agricultural production is at 1970 levels. One out of every two Guatemalans is either unemployed or without full-time work. The annual 25 percent inflation rate since 1984 has cut workers' buying power almost in half. Consequently, in recent years thousands of Guatemalans migrated to the U.S. in search of work.

"It's shocking how many Guatemalans reside there," says Guatemalan Congressman Oliverio Garcia Rodas, who recently visited the U.S. to evaluate the effects of the Simpson-Rodino law.

He says that at least 600,000 Guatemalans live in the U.S., at least half of them illegally. He conservatively estimates that some 100,000 will be deported.

Indeed, in Olga De Valenzuela's neighborhood, the imminent deportation of relatives is the talk of the block. "Everybody here has a relative or a friend in the U.S.," says one woman. "In a few months this place will be crawling with deported people."

"When some 70,000 or more people suddenly return to the country,

it will be a negative blow to the economy," says Deputy Economic Minister Eduardo Estrada. The director of the central bank's foreign exchange department, Carlos Najera, estimates the country could lose an estimated \$36 million a year in foreign exchange money that those deported would have sent to their families.

Minister of Labor Catalina Sobe-ranis admits the government is financially unable to confront immediate, massive deportations, and says Guatemala has been seeking the support of the other Central American nations to jointly request a temporary postponement of the Simpson-Rodino law to allow those countries preparation time.

Sobe-ranis estimates that 1.5 million Central Americans face deportation from the U.S. "The effect on all of the Central American countries of the U.S.' sovereign but unilateral decision must be considered by the Reagan administration," says Sobe-ranis.

President Vinicio Cerezo will formally request a moratorium of the law in a meeting with President Reagan in Washington next week. The Guatemalan government may also seek economic aid through the Reagan administration's Caribbean Basin Initiative Fund and from other countries.

—Kevin Robinson

tough re-election campaign this year and having barely survived a bitter controversy over dumping gypsum into the Mississippi River, has taken a strong stand against the smelly barge in favor of low-profile hazardous wastes that are transported regularly but more quietly into the state for incineration. But it turns out that there's no place like home. As *In These Times* went to press the down-in-the-dumps barge was ending its nine-week Caribbean vacation and heading back to New York.

## Dumping on our southern neighbors

Business representatives of U.S. waste disposal firms are touring Latin America looking for countries to rent them land for industrial and municipal waste dumps, reports Manuel Torres Calderon in the *Excelsior* of Mexico City. One of these companies, Applied Resources Technology (ART) of Los Angeles, tried to strike a \$30-million deal with Honduras that would turn that country's southern coastal swamplands (the poorest area of Honduras) into a 900,000-acre dump. ART proposed to pay Honduras \$8 a ton for the right to dump unmarked containers of hazardous waste at the rate of 10,000 tons a day. Apparently the waste shipments would be approved by the Environmental Protection Agency but that responsibility would stop as soon as the waste left U.S. territory. Minister of the Presidency Celso Arias, supporting the deal, said, "With this money we will be able to irrigate the whole southern area of the country." Others called for rejection of ART's proposal. President of the United Federation of Workers Hector Hernandez said, "We have enough garbage with the contras, we don't need any more thrown on top of us." Although ART's proposal was officially rejected by Honduras, government sources claim that the decision was merely postponed.

## EPA respects Mexican sovereignty

The U.S. and Mexico signed an agreement last November to allow American companies to ship hazardous waste to Mexico for processing and disposal, according to a recent report by Fred Bonavita and Rob Meckel in the *Houston Post*. Although this previously unnoticed agreement may solve the waste disposal problems for American corporations and consequently save them lots of money, it offers no protection to the environment. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials admit all of the following: that the EPA has no knowledge of the quality of Mexico's waste disposal or treatment sites; that the EPA has not tried to inspect those sites because it does not have the right to do so; that the EPA has no authority over or interest in what happens when the wastes cross the border; that the EPA relies on the company shipping the waste to provide information on what wastes are being exported. The U.S. Customs Service, out of concern for safety, has told agents not to check the contents of hazardous and potentially deadly waste containers against the bills of shipment.

Do legitimate waste disposal sites exist in Mexico? Manuel Fernandez of the Mexican Conservation Federation in Mexico City said that he knows of no facilities in his country able to handle hazardous wastes properly. "We don't want our country to be a receiver of toxic wastes... Even if it is brought here legally, nobody knows what to do with it," Nick Kamp, an environmentalist in southern Arizona, said he has heard "lots and lots of stories" about illegal waste dumping in northern Mexico. EPA's Wendy Grieder said she too has heard "lots of rumors" but has seen "no concrete evidence." And if Mexico's waste-processing facilities are a sham? "There is nothing we can do about it," said Grieder. "It's really none of our business; it's a sovereignty issue."

## Texans react in style

Texas lawmakers have concerns about this new hazardous waste agreement. One at least was noble: "I'm really concerned for Mexico," said State Sen. Hector Uribe. "The whole country is in a financial disadvantage, but I really question the wisdom of permitting one's country to become a dumping ground for the country that generates more hazardous wastes than any other country in the world." Others are concerned about the dangers of hosting the Mexican-bound hazardous waste while it is in transit across the state. State Sen. Tati Santiesteban wants Texas officials to be notified about the hazardous waste shipments. "I believe that it would be ideal if Mexico would take our wastes, but I think we should be informed on the transportation."



By Richard Ryan

WASHINGTON, D.C.

**T**HE CHANTING, EXUBERANT CROWD OF MORE than 100,000 people evoked memories of the great anti-war demonstrations of the late '60s and early '70s as it took two hours to file past the White House.

But the April 25 National Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and Southern Africa differed from the peace marches of the Vietnam era in one important way: the single-largest contingent at the march was made up of labor unionists. By the Mobilization's estimate, some 25,000 unionists marched. Indeed, the Mobilization prides itself on having brought organized labor into the peace and justice movement to a previously unequalled degree. Support from unions like the United Auto Workers would have been unthinkable even a few years ago. The presidents of 21 national and international unions were among the co-sponsors of the march, and the labor turnout was especially impressive in the face of the cold, wet weather and weeks of denunciations from hawkish AFL-CIO leaders.

**Protestations about the protests:** The controversy surrounding the Mobilization was highlighted by a series of articles in publications like the *New Republic* and the conservative *Washington Times*. These pieces criticized the labor unions for joining a coalition that included groups like CISPE, which supports the guerrillas in El Salvador. The *New Republic's* Morton Kondracke suggested that behind the Mobilization's "idealistic liberal front" there lurked a "radical left-wing" reality out to aid 'Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries' in Central America." Kondracke called the coalition of labor, churches and students "ominous."

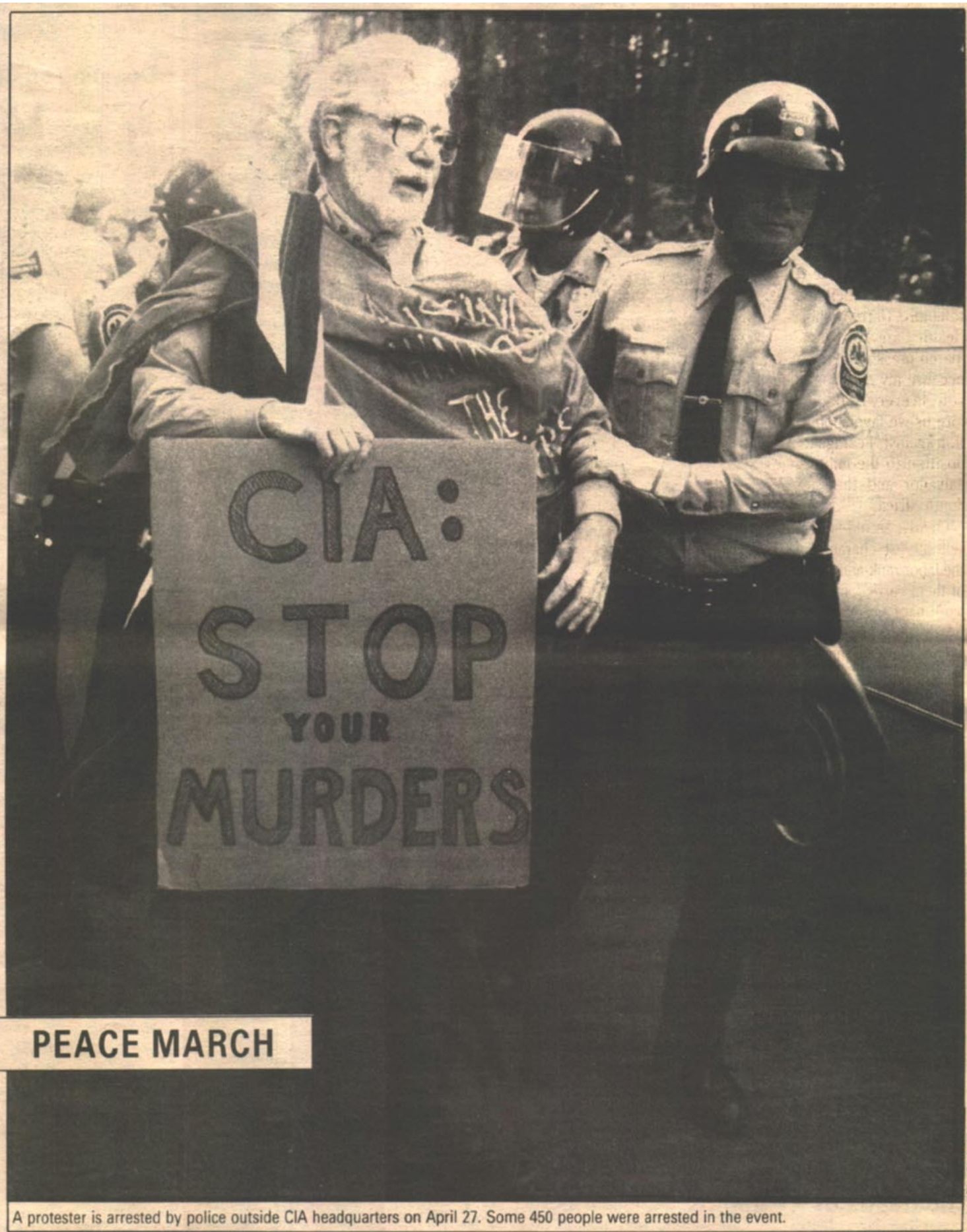
But the Reagan administration's allies in the press cannot be credited with having launched the red-baiting. That dishonor is reserved for AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, who on March 23 sent a letter to the labor group's affiliates asking them to shun the Mobilization as a front for pro-communist organizations. He claimed the Mobilization sought elimination of all aid to Central America (a touchy issue for Kirkland, who had joined a call for a regional "Marshall Plan" while a member of the Reagan-Kissinger Commission on Central America). A group of religious leaders supporting the Mobilization responded in writing to Kirkland: "The appeal we have issued to the American people makes no reference whatsoever to supporting a cutoff of all aid."

Kirkland's letter was followed up by a vehement letter by John Joyce, president of the International Bricklayers Union and Allied Craftsmen. Attached to Joyce's letter was a lengthy memo by an aide, Joel Freedman, that berated the Mobilization's organizers for support of Nicaragua's Sandinista government and other popular revolutionary movements in Central America. In the face of these attacks, some labor watchers predicted that the Communications Workers and the United Food and Commercial Workers would withdraw from the rally. But not a single union repented.

**More than disagreement:** "We don't have any problem with other unionists disagreeing with us," commented David Dyson of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, the labor representative on the Mobilization's steering committee. "The

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## New protest leaves labor with old question: 'Which side are you on?'



problem has been in the tone and the accuracy of their statements. It's one thing to have people disagree with you; it's another thing to be red-baited and lied about. I'm not saying we haven't raised questions about use of the economic aid in Central America. Some [U.S. tax] money is obviously going into the pockets of the military [in Latin America]."

(Mobilization literature cites U.S. funding of the Salvadoran army's rural pacification program as an example of indirect war-related aid. The Salvadoran military receives this support through the U.S. Agency for In-

ternational Development. And though Joel Freedman claimed in his memo for the Bricklayers Union that the Mobilization had demanded a cutoff of all aid to Central America, he was unable, when contacted by *In These Times*, to cite any document that would refute the Mobilization's repeated denial of his assertions.)

Dyson, who accurately predicted "an enormous number" of unionists would participate in the rally, chided the AFL-CIO's leadership for falling behind American working people on peace and justice issues. He believes that AFL-CIO leaders "need to listen

to the rank and file on this issue. The leadership is locked into this Cold War mentality."

Accusations against march organizers ascended to a comic pitch on the day before the event, when the *Washington Times* ran an undocumented story accusing the Mobilization of having received \$3 million from Libyan Col. Muammar Khadafy channelled through the Nicaraguan embassy. Mobilization spokesman Ned Greenberg described the story as a "bald-faced lie," and said most of the Mobilization's approximately \$200,000 in finances came from union and church contributions. "The unions have been great,"



said Greenberg, citing AFSCME, AFGE, NEA and SEI as major contributors.

**Looking left again:** One may well wonder why rank-and-file unionists, many of whom suppressed their natural economic allegiance three years ago to vote for Reagan, are now returning to the political left. Obviously, Irangate has soured the administration's image among working-class Americans, but the attention paid to issues like the trade deficit and offshore plant relocations has also struck home. "I'm not going to say [the peace and justice agenda] is a top priority issue for all rank and file, but unionists are becoming aware of how much foreign relations affect their own jobs," Dyson said, emphasizing the importance of an international labor standard that would discourage U.S. corporations from opportunistically fleeing the country for a cheaper labor climate.

The testimony of union leaders and members at the demonstration underscores a powerful rank-and-file sentiment that mainstream labor chieftains may find difficult to ignore. Harry Nicholas, president of the Health Care Workers United, told a pre-march press conference, "I am here today because my members demand it. In every vote, in every resolution that has come before us we favor policies of non-intervention against Nicaragua, and of complete opposition to the military government of El Salvador and the racist dictatorship of South Africa."

Clearly, an old-fashioned brand of moral self-interest characterized the majority of the labor rank-and-filers at the march. Many of them carried signs with the slogan: "We work hard for our money, not for the contras."

For many of the unionists, the Reagan foreign policy is simply one of the more visible aspects of a mentality that pervades every corner of the current political landscape. Kurt Novakowski, part of a large, noisy delegation representing the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, Local 506 from Erie, Pa., told *In These Times*, "We have too much money going to defense. Every time you put money into a tank or an

## The April 25 National Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and Southern Africa included some 25,000 unionists—an unprecedented showing. Even though AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland opposed participation, the heads of 21 unions were among the event's co-sponsors.

aircraft carrier that takes away from jobs we could be creating in our own system. I know my children are going to face the same thing that I face, which is joblessness. Imagine that—joblessness when you're skilled."

According to Novakowski, big cutbacks at the GE and AMSCO plants in Erie have left unemployment at around 20 percent. When asked why, in the face of economic hardships back home, he had come to protest foreign policies in Washington, he responded, "If this



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Union members made up the single largest contingent in the march. Said one labor leader, "I am here today because my members demand it."

is what we're going through here in America, imagine what it's like for workers in South Africa."

About half of the rank and file questioned by *In These Times* had heard of Kirkland's opposition to the march. None said it had any effect on their perception of the event. Luther Bogan, an employee for 28 years at the GM Truck and Tractor plant in St. Louis, Mo., dismissed Kirkland's opposition. "It means nothing to me," he said, "because the cause is just."

**Disorganization and disobedience:** It remains to be seen if the new peace and justice coalition will be able to combine its strength in numbers with the political sophistication that will be necessary to sway Congress. April 27, the Monday following the march, was declared Congressional Accountability Day by the Mobilization, and an estimated 400 Mobilization participants stalked the halls of the Capitol. What might have been an impressive showing of grassroots tactical savvy turned out to be yet another demonstration of the amateurism that frequently hobbles the left in this country.

There was little central coordination of

the lobbying effort: individuals who opted to take part in the congressional buttonholing were given an orientation packet and a lengthy list of potential lawmakers to visit, and then left on their own. Rather than pre-select a small number of crucial legislators to focus on, visitors were told to make appointments beforehand with members of their choosing.

The resulting effort was spotty and disorganized. Key swing voters like conservative Rep. Les Aspin (D-WI), chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and moderate Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) were not lobbied at all, according to their offices. Another central player in foreign relations is Rep. Dave McCurdy (D-OK), who has put together several compromise packages on contra aid. According to his press secretary, only a few groups of two or three people came by McCurdy's office unannounced and spoke briefly with one of his aides. A Mobilization official admitted that the lobbying effort was disorganized, mainly because most of the coalition's energy went into organizing the march. "The lobbying effort took a back seat," he said.

Surprisingly, the confrontationalist tactics of civil disobedience generated the most favorable publicity: national television and print media gave extensive coverage to the relatively peaceful April 27 arrest of 450 protesters in the driveways of the CIA headquarters. Mobilization spokesman Greenberg enthusiastically described the public reaction to the arrest as positive, which "showed how the peace and justice movement has matured since the '60s. These people weren't angry youths shaking their fists at authority; they were citizens taking a stand, conveying a message," he says.

"In some weird way civil disobedience is more respectable than demonstrating. The demonstration was red-baited, and those arrested were praised." Greenberg agreed that this might be a result of the general perception, in the wake of Irangate, that the CIA is no bastion of law and order. "Our protesters were chanting, 'You're arresting the wrong people,'" Greenberg observed, "and that seems to have struck a lot of people as being true."

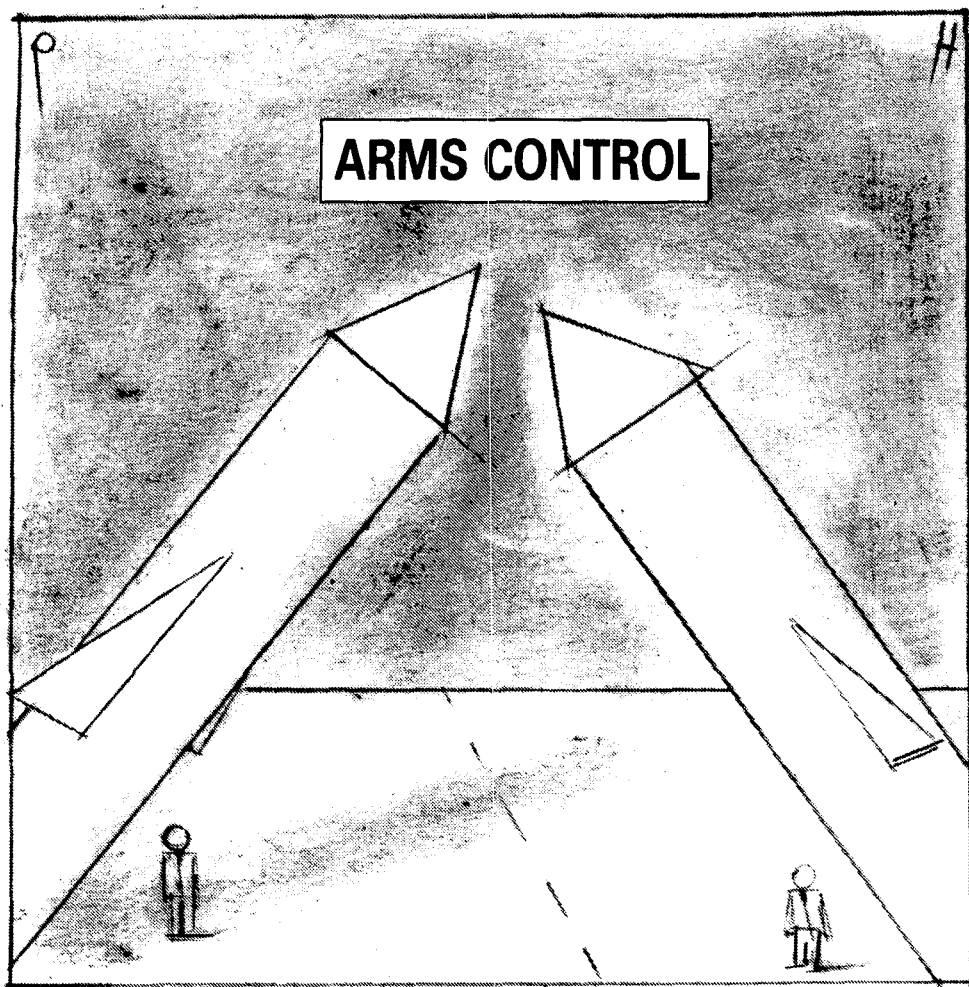
Richard Ryan is a frequent contributor to *In These Times*.

The CIA protest: "In some weird way civil disobedience is more respectable than demonstrating," said one organizer.



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## Short-range missiles: the next arms race?

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

**N**OW THAT THE FIRST "ZERO OPTION" looks like a sure thing, the question is whether there will be a second zero option and what it will mean. At stake may be the next round of the arms race in Europe.

The first zero option applies to what are called long-range intermediate nuclear forces (LRINF). "Intermediate" means somewhere between strategic (what the U.S. and the USSR can fire directly at each other) and battlefield (the ones NATO forces and the Warsaw Pact could use to destroy each other—and no doubt themselves as well—in a war in Europe that stumbled over the nuclear threshold). The LRINF are the famous Euromissiles, Soviet SS-20s and U.S. Pershing 2 and cruise, that can strike Western Europe from Soviet territory and vice versa. They have ranges of more than 1,000 kilometers.

Once it appeared inevitable that Moscow and Washington were going to agree to get rid of these long-range missiles, nervous NATO leaders began saying that this "zero option" would leave the Warsaw Pact with a superiority in short-range missiles.

Then on April 10 in Prague, Mikhail Gorbachov offered to extend the zero option downward to the range of 500 kilometers. This offer implicitly created a new category of shorter-range "intermediate" missiles, in the 500-to-1,000 kilometer range. The U.S. has no weapons of its own in that range in Europe, but has equipped the German Bundeswehr with 72 Pershing 1A missiles (the U.S. keeps the key to unlock nuclear warheads). Gorbachov said the USSR would scrap the SS-12 and SS-22 missiles stationed

in Czechoslovakia and East Germany in response to the 1983 deployment of Pershing 2 and cruise missiles in NATO countries.

Gorbachov also offered to open talks on getting rid of "tactical operational missiles," without specifying the range. This could be interpreted to mean a Soviet readiness both to broaden the first "zero option" downward to the 500 range and to negotiate a second "zero option" on missiles down to the 120-kilometer range. Soviet officials seem to be saving their clarifications for the upcoming negotiations.

Precisely those leaders on the NATO side most hostile to the idea interpreted Gorbachov's proposal as leading to the removal of all nuclear weapons.

**Peace could break out:** Outgoing NATO commander in chief, U.S. Army Gen. Bernard Rogers complained to *Newsweek* that Gorbachov was "trying to denuclearize Western Europe," supposedly in order to decouple Europe from U.S. strategic forces. Gen. Rogers said the U.S. should "freeze the Soviets' shorter-range missiles at a low level and get their agreement that we can have an equal number." This would mean that the USSR should take short-range missiles out while NATO puts them in.

There is "no consensus within the alliance on going to the zero level on these missiles," Gen. Rogers said. Such a zero option would "wipe out our opportunity to strike even the Eastern European countries. And it would guarantee that West Germany was the battlefield in a nuclear exchange." Like everybody else, Gen. Rogers seemed to be mixed up about ranges; anyway, it is not clear how Germany would be a nuclear battlefield if Europe were really denuclearized.

Gen. Rogers was right in saying there was no consensus in the NATO alliance. While West German foreign minister Hans Dieter Genscher welcomed Gorbachov's proposals, the deputy head of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) faction in the Bundestag, Volker Rühe, flew to Washington on April 22 to lobby vigorously against any short-range zero option. Specifically, Rühe didn't want to see the American Pershing 1A missiles (which fall in the 500-1,000 kilometer category) taken away from the German NATO forces. In general, he spoke for those in NATO circles who fear that the removal of Euromissiles can be extended downward to short-range missiles.

Bonn was sharply split on the issue. In general, Genscher and his Free Democratic Party, who control the foreign ministry, welcomed the zero option in its expanded version, while the Christian Democrats, who control the defense ministry, were opposed.

The defense ministry insisted that an agreement on short-range missiles should allow NATO to "build up" its forces to the Warsaw Pact level.

What is at stake here is the whole next wave of NATO arms development. It needs to keep Soviet missiles in place in order to "build up" to them or to build defenses against them.

A fancy new phase of the arms race in Europe is projected around Gen. Rogers' "Follow-On Forces Attack" (FOFA) concept. The idea behind FOFA is to use new "smart weapons" to find and destroy the Warsaw Pact's second-echelon forces by deep strikes with missiles that are so precise they may carry conventional rather than nuclear warheads. FOFA was sold to NATO five years ago as a way to: raise the nuclear threshold; use thrilling new "emerging technologies"; carry any European war onto enemy territory; and counter the "threat" of massed Warsaw Pact second-echelon forces.

Yet objections have been raised to all those goals. First, how can the Soviets be counted on to be sure that incoming missiles carry conventional warheads, and not fire back nuclear ones? FOFA would in fact accelerate the development of "dual purpose" missiles, raising new and perhaps insurmountable verification problems for future arms-control agreements. Second, the cost effectiveness of these "emerging technology" (ET) weapons is more than doubtful. And Europeans suspect that FOFA is a way to create a European

### There is a need to create a European NATO market for new 'emerging technology' weapons systems from the U.S.

NATO market for U.S. arms innovations, rather than to give European industry a chance to develop these "emerging technologies." Third, FOFA has a potentially provocative first-strike look to it. Finally, the Warsaw Pact seems to have reorganized its forces so that there is no "second echelon" worthy of all this expensive attention.

**Pentagon arms-twisting:** More recently, as "Star Wars" came to the fore, the U.S. has been interested in promoting European anti-missile defense systems as a way of getting the European allies, especially the Ger-

mans, to go along happily with the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Thus German Defense Minister Manfred Wörner abandoned his initial opposition to SDI in exchange for a (small) piece of the action in the form of some hypothetical "European Defense Initiative" to shoot down incoming Soviet missiles.

To frighten Europeans into desiring their own anti-tactical ballistic missile (ATBM) system, the Pentagon has been telling them that the Soviets are about to perfect their shorter-range missiles to such a degree of accuracy that they will be "dual capable"—able to destroy NATO targets with conventional as well as nuclear warheads. Such accuracy is unproved and doubted by many experts. In short, as so often before, the Pentagon is projecting a "Soviet threat" that reflects exactly what the U.S. military-industrial complex wants to do with the "emerging technologies."

A report to the North Atlantic Assembly last November written by Karsten Voigt of West Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD) noted a "consistent political 'push' by the U.S. directed at ATBMs for Europe." The Voigt report observed that "there is presently no agreed threat assessment in NATO on the short-range ballistic missile threat" and that "no one seems to have any idea of the potential costs." They are sure to be astronomical.

Pentagon motivations are not hard to see. As with FOFA, there is the need for a European NATO market for new U.S. weapons, even if the weapons in question may be designed for use in other theaters. Indeed, some smart weapons, whose origins go back to the Vietnam War, seem more suitable for "AirLand Battle 2000"—the Army's official vision of mixed conventional-nuclear-chemical weapons on Third World battlefields in the year 2000—than for Europe. But European allies must help "share the burden."

Certain Europeans, such as the German aerospace industry in Bavaria, are only too eager to get a share of this burden. The growing German military-industrial complex, politically linked to the conservative Christian Democrats, cannot be delighted at the prospect of Soviet-U.S. agreements limiting future missile development in Europe.

Genscher's Free Democrats seem more sensitive to those business interests seeking expanded trade with the Soviet Union.

The Voigt report points to "ominous implications for arms control" in an ATBM system. There are ambiguities as to whether or not a European ATBM system would violate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which is cherished as the basis of all arms control. The ABM Treaty stands in the way of SDI. The Voigt report said arms-control advocates fear that an "ATBM loophole" in the ABM Treaty could be used for a process of "creeping abrogation." That is, testing and development of anti-ballistic systems ostensibly for the European theater could in fact serve to develop a strategic U.S. ABM system.

Part of the appeal of an intermediate-missile zero option to the Reagan administration is that it need not interfere with further development of either SDI or short-range "smart" weapons. The Pentagon and its friends can hope that a Soviet-American LRINF zero option will leave the way open to the next phase of the arms race. Others hope that a zero option will lead to zero option and the beginning of genuine nuclear disarmament. □



By William Gasperini

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

If you look at a map, our country is shaped like a teardrop. And that's how many of us feel now about Sri Lanka.

—M.H. Zaman, Moslem businessman

**N**O SOLUTION TO SRI LANKA'S BLOODY strife seems in sight. Negotiations on a political settlement are at an impasse, insurgents control significant territory and battles have been raging in adjoining areas.

Since January the three-year-old guerrilla war appears to have sharply escalated, even though both sides in the conflict—the Colombo government and Tamil militants fighting for a separate state—have expressed a willingness to negotiate an end to the fighting. Last month Tamil fighters were blamed for the deaths of 127 bus passengers in a jungle area, and for a bus station bombing in Colombo that left at least 110 people dead. Sri Lankan air force planes then launched reprisal raids against reputed guerrilla bases. Casualties were reported to be heavy.

**Trail of blood:** An estimated 5,000 people have died since 1983 as the violence has grown from riots between Sri Lanka's two major ethnic groups into a guerrilla war between rebels and government security forces. Three-quarters of Sri Lanka's 15 million people are Sinhalese, whose predominance in political affairs is being challenged by rebels of the Tamil minority community, a predominantly Hindu group that makes up 18 percent of the population and holds strong ties to neighboring India.

After independence from Great Britain in 1948, Tamil grievances steadily mounted as Sinhalese-dominated governments alienated the minority community. Ultimately, disillusioned Tamil youth felt the only answer was to fight for a separate state, to be called "Tamil Eelam" (homeland).

In the traditional Tamil ares of the far-northern Jaffna peninsula, militants of the strongest of five rebel groups, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), wield effective control and even run civil administration.

The situation in the jungles of the eastern provinces is far less settled, as rival Tamil groups battle each other as well as government forces in those predominantly Tamil areas. The LTTE has effectively eliminated three other groups.

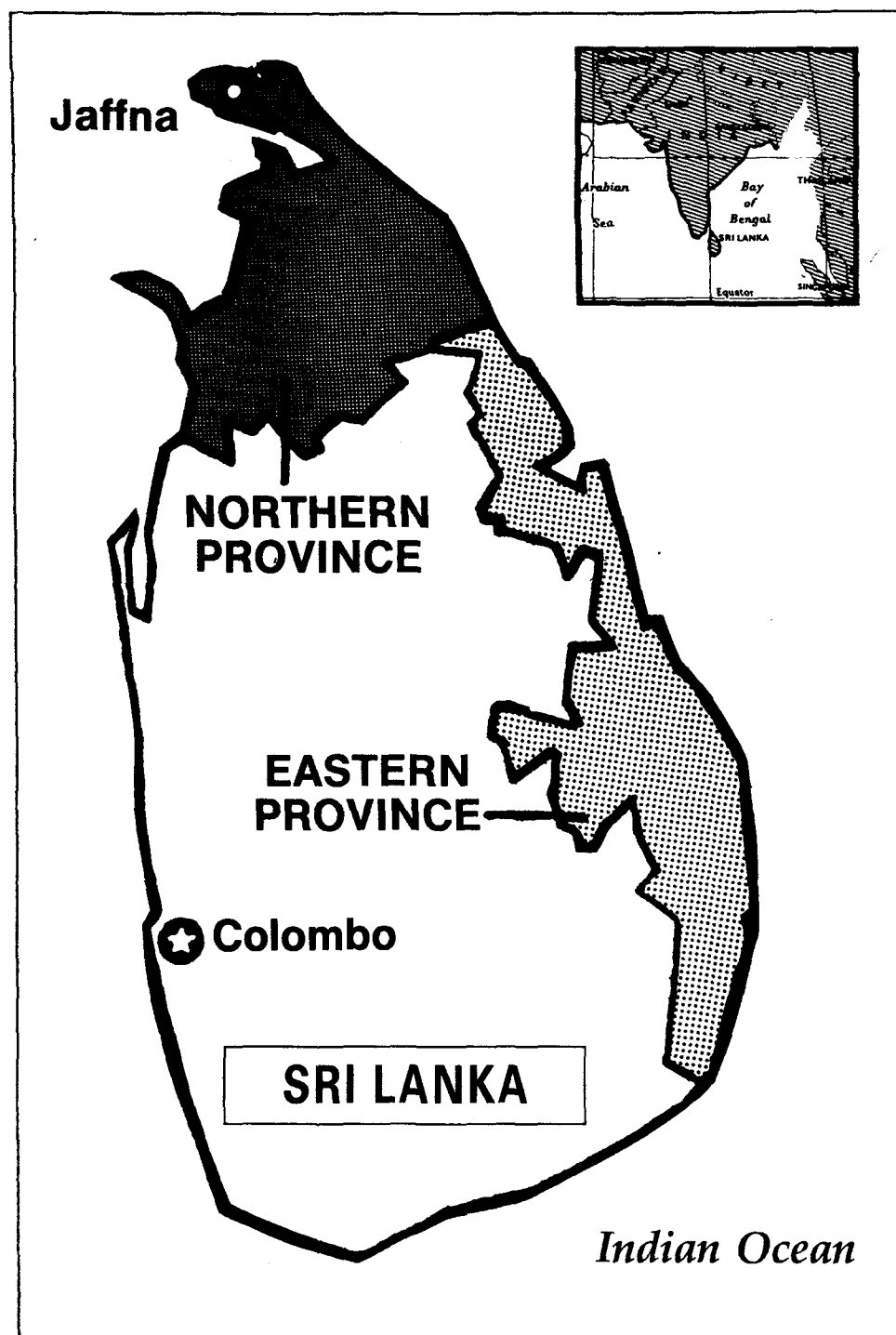
Ongoing massacres by rebel and government forces alike have led to international condemnation of both sides by human rights organizations, including recent United Nations and U.S. State Department reports.

**El Salvador and India:** To an outside observer, much of the current situation appears reminiscent of El Salvador. Like that country, the Sri Lankan government praises itself as a democracy and calls for dialogue while stepping up military pressure. It also charges the foreign media with a bias favoring the rebels while it wields effective control over the local press and claims an outside power is aiding the rebels.

That foreign power is India, the neighboring giant that has influenced the course of Sri Lankan history from the beginning. The Sinhalese are believed to have migrated to Sri Lanka from northern India around 500 B.C., and speak an Indo-Aryan tongue related to Hindi. The Tamils speak the same Dravidian tongue as 50 million Tamils living in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu, the area from which they came first as traders and later as invaders as empires waxed and waned over the centuries.

A second Tamil group of about one million

## An ethnic conflict develops into all-out guerrilla war



lives primarily in the hill country of southern Sri Lanka where they labor on extensive tea estates. The descendants of workers brought to the area from India by British colonialists 100 years ago, they are known as "Indian Tamils," and apart from language and the Hindu religion have little in common with the highly educated, business-oriented northern Tamil group. Though not involved in the ethnic conflict, they have suffered reprisals merely for being ethnic Tamils, and many hope to leave for India, to which they still have strong ties.

Further complicating the situation are the Tamil-speaking Moslems, 7 percent of the total population, who reside all over the island but especially in the east. Many of these so-called "Moors" feel compromised over the conflict and unsure which way to go to preserve their identity. Others are involved in the fight with the LTTE, particularly in Jaffna.

**Meddler or mediator?** India's position in the situation is critical. Under political pressures from India's own 50 million Tamils, the Indian government grants unofficial haven to the militants in Tamil Nadu state, where an estimated 100,000 refugees also live. New Delhi thus leaves itself open to charges from Colombo of "harboring terrorists," who smuggle arms and equipment across the 20-mile Palk Strait separating the

two countries.

At the same time, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's government plays an on-again, off-again role as mediator between Colombo and the militants. While offering public support for the Tamil cause, Gandhi clearly cannot agree to an "Eelam" solution given his own problems with separatist movements in India and the region.

A breakthrough to the crisis appeared imminent in December after a series of meetings between high-level Indian and Sri Lankan officials. Colombo offered to grant limited autonomy through provincial councils to the Tamils but refused to allow linkage of the north and east provinces in a "homeland."

Chiding Colombo for pursuing a dual policy in calling for talks while simultaneously trying to blast the militants from their strongholds, India then suspended negotiations until the Sri Lanka government "stopped vacillating" and backtracking on earlier commitments. With barbs continuing to fly between Colombo and New Delhi, the LTTE says it will talk only with India's mediation and only when the government shows "it sincerely wants a settlement."

Given Colombo's stronger military might, top Tiger leaders also have expressed willingness to compromise on their goal of winning a separate state hoping to gain a "lasting

solution."

**The roots of crisis:** Throughout history the two major groups lived together in relative harmony. Before the Portuguese arrived in the 16th century, separate kingdoms existed on the island—including a Tamil area in the far north. The British arrived in 1796 and quickly succeeded in dominating the entire island for the first time, planting the roots of the current crisis. As in India, the British played ethnic groups off each other to rule effectively. As a minority, the hard-working Tamils cooperated and were rewarded with university slots and civil service jobs over the less cooperative Sinhalese.

Tensions rose in the years after independence in 1948, with rising nationalism under the "Sinhala Only" movement and the declaration of Sinhalese as the country's official language in 1956. In ensuing years schools segregated along ethnic lines. Measures adopted by subsequent governments included quotas for university and government job slots which severely restricted access for Tamil youths.

Promising to redress some of these grievances, current President J.R. Jayewardene swept to power in 1977. While cutting back on the quotas and declaring Tamil a "national language" (still a step lower than official status), disaffection also grew in the Tamil community against moderate Tamil leaders in the opposition Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) party as young Tamils began organizing militant groups to demand nothing less than a separate state.

"The government is to blame for forcing this issue to extremes," says a TULF leader Neelan Tiruchelvam, a former member of Parliament. "The two Sinhalese parties use the conflict as a kind of football, to be kicked around in order to stay in power."

**A turning point:** July 1983 became a critical turning point in Sri Lankan history. After news reached the south that Tamil militants had killed 13 soldiers in Jaffna, Sinhalese mobs burned Tamil businesses and homes in Colombo and the hill country tea estates. More than 500 persons, mostly Tamils, died in a week of terror.

President Jayawardene's immediate response was to force all members of Parliament to sign an oath of allegiance to the government, prompting the resignation of all 17 Tamil legislators, including Tiruchelvam, and further choking off moderate avenues for change.

As the insurgency in the north and east grew, Sri Lanka has steadily militarized. The armed forces doubled in size to a standing force of 24,000, in addition to special reserve units known as "homeguards."

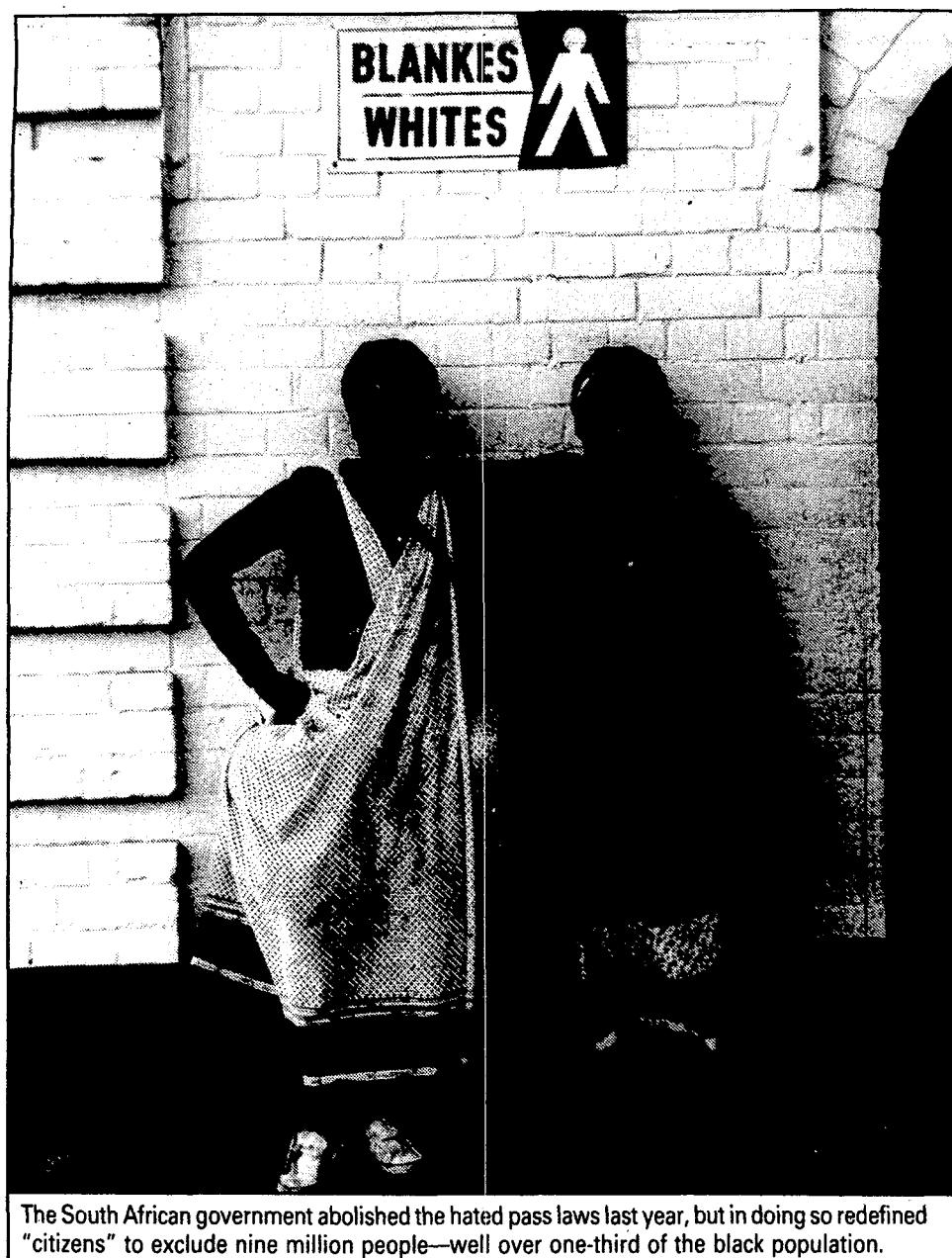
Meanwhile, counterinsurgency units called Special Task Forces have also formed, trained by Israeli advisers and in Pakistani camps. This has further alarmed India, which fears the pro-Western slant of Jayawardene's government. Global politics may also factor into the equation, due to the strategic importance of Trincomalee port in the eastern province. Colombo would clearly not like to accede the port to an autonomous Tamil-dominated regional government.

The U.S. remains officially neutral, all the while praising what 80-year-old President Jayawardene calls his "five-star democracy."

The war has had a heavy impact on the Sri Lankan economy, as defense expenditures have risen 15-fold in the last 10 years—to more than 15 percent of the national budget. Tourism has fallen off by 50 percent, with many southern beach hotels operating nearly empty. Nonetheless, the country

*Continued on page 22*





The South African government abolished the hated pass laws last year, but in doing so redefined "citizens" to exclude nine million people—well over one-third of the black population.

"freedom of movement...for all citizens of the Republic of South Africa on a non-discriminatory basis." COSATU, which represents more than half a million black workers, threatened to spearhead a massive pass-burning campaign if the hated documents, which for the past 70 years have been a major focus of political resistance, were not abolished. Days before COSATU's deadline, the government announced that the pass laws, which allowed only those Africans who met stringent qualifications to live with their

## SOUTH AFRICA

families in urban centers; were dead. They would be replaced with a policy of "orderly urbanization."

"In the first few days after the announcement," said a COSATU spokesman, "we didn't know what the catch was. It was clear that there was a catch somewhere because we knew that influx control is part of a much broader system of exploitation."

The catch was soon apparent. The South African government had defined "citizens" to exclude nine million people—well over one-third of the black population. The fine print was in two pieces of legislation. One, which incorporated several black areas into "independent" homelands, was passed weeks after the repeal of the pass laws. The other, standard immigration legislation, is now to be used to control the movement of black South Africans in an unprecedented way.

The Aliens Act makes the position of some nine million blacks who have been denationalized more precarious in the cities than it ever was under the pass laws, argues the prominent South African civil rights and community lawyer Geoff Budlender.

"All South Africans of African descent," says Budlender, "are allocated 'homeland' citizenship on the basis of language, cultural, family or geographical ties. As their putative 'homelands' become constitutionally independent, however, they automatically become aliens in South Africa. Children born to these new foreigners are also aliens wherever they are born." "Homelands" are basically arbitrary reserves, recognized only by Pretoria and fully dependent on the South African government for their budgets.

"Aliens"—now defined as citizens of the four "independent" homelands (Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda or the Ciskei) (the TBVC countries)—may not enter white South Africa without permission. They can be arrested and deported, and they may not work without special permission.

About four million "citizens" of these homelands live outside of them. Less than half of these citizens can expect to regain South African citizenship, says Sheena Duncan, who runs the Black Sash Advice Office in Johannesburg. The Black Sash, a liberal civil rights group, has assisted thousands of black people who have run afoul of the daunting influx control laws. Duncan is considered one of the most knowledgeable on the complex laws affecting blacks.

She sharply chastised President Reagan last July when he praised the South African government for restoring "citizenship wrongly stripped away...to nearly six million blacks."

"Someone should have told him," she said, "that the government's estimate of the number of people likely to get citizenship back is 1,751,400. None of them has yet had citizenship restored. The millions of people who will not be able to get their citizenship

back are now in a much worse position than they were before. They are aliens and subject to the Aliens Act." Previously some migrant workers secured urban rights if they could prove 10 years continuous employment with one employer.

Soon after the repeal of the pass laws, the Department of Home Affairs urged employers to "meticulously" observe the Aliens Act when employing blacks, since failure to do so would "carry heavy penalties." Employers who employ "aliens" without permission can be fined about \$2,500 or sentenced to two years in prison.

"One of the tragic results," says Duncan, "is that within a few years people from the TBVC homelands will be cut off from the job markets."

**Promises, promises:** Black communities are intensely aware of the implications of a loss of citizenship. In the Oukasie township of Brits, north of Pretoria, the black community put up sustained resistance to plans to resettle them in the new township of Lethlabile, 15 miles away, bordering ominously on the Bophutatswana homeland.

Residents do not believe government promises that Lethlabile will not be incorporated into Bophutatswana, says Alan Morris, a field worker from the Surplus Peoples Project, an anti-resettlement lobbying and information group. "The government has in the past broken its word on incorporation. If it is incorporated, residents will lose their South African citizenship and their right to seek work in the Brits area" where 40 factories are located.

Johnson Mpukumpa, a leader and key initiator of the first organization representing migrant laborers who live in single-sex hostels, was dismayed by the new dispensation. His Western Cape Hostel Dwellers Association had vowed to fight "for the God-given right to family life." Now the pass laws were gone, but his members were foreigners.

"Any solution that does not include the majority of migrant workers who are the people really affected by apartheid cannot be recognized by us," says Mpukumpa. For the past 18 years he has shared a "kitchen room" with another man in the single-sex hostels in the Nyanga East township near Cape Town. His family, who live in a Transkei village, have seen him twice a year—at Christmas and at Easter—since he began work as a young man.

"Thousands of people have lost their citizenship because they are supposed to have come from homelands that have taken independence but that we do not recognize. We in the hostels feel we want to enjoy full citizenship. We want to stay here instead of being referred to 'national states.' It is useless for us to hang on to that sort of citizenship," he adds.

Exactly how useless is demonstrated by the thousands of people who have pushed past the influx barriers away from the depressed homelands and into the cities. In the Western Cape, where pass laws have traditionally been most harshly applied, it is apparent in the massive increase in the black population in the past decade. In 1984 a black affairs official estimated that "at least 1,000 people a day were arriving in the city [from the homelands]." This was despite thumb-in-the-dike tactics like roadblocks and almost daily demolitions of squatter shelters.

A woman from the Crossroads squatter camp told Laurine Platzky and Cherryl Walker, authors of *The Surplus People*, why she had returned to Cape Town after being resettled in the Ciskei: "When I get there

# The battle against influx control is far from over

By Pippa Green

JOHANNESBURG

**B**LACK COAL MINERS IN SOUTH AFRICA—members of the largest black trade union in the country, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM)—have brought their wives and children to live with them in defiance of the notorious migrant labor and single-sex hostel system in South African mines.

Cyril Ramaphosa, general secretary of the NUM, said in mid-April that 600 women and children had moved into the hostels of seven coal mines—a move to mark the start of an

intensive miners' campaign against migrant labor. "The time has come for miners and their families to start living naturally," he told a press conference in South Africa.

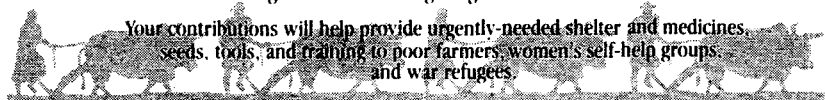
The mineworkers' action is the first organized challenge to migrant labor since the South African government abolished the pass laws last summer. Yet the government has continued to control black people's movement.

It was partly as a result of pressure from the NUM's parent body, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), that the government publicly committed itself to

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[Ciskei] things were tough for me because the place is dry and there are no jobs. It is just impossible for a human being to live in those conditions. So I only stayed for two months and after that I felt I couldn't take it any longer and I forced my way back to Cape Town."

**Limitations:** Another catch in the government's apparent reform move is the linking of urban rights for Africans to the availability of "suitable accommodation" and employment.

Budlender contends that provision of family housing for Africans "has been deliberately limited as a means of influx control."

Urban funds have been channeled into the construction of single-sex hotels, while funds for family housing have been redirected to the homelands. By 1985 there was a housing shortage of 538,000 for more than three million black people. Africans cannot take up surplus housing in the white areas as the Group Areas Act prohibits racially mixed residential areas.

"Accommodation is still the big question mark," says Mpukumpa, speaking in the dusty communal yard outside the migrant hostels. "The migrant workers want to stay with their families permanently in the cities. Now that is a major issue, and the government should approach the people and find out what should be done about accommodation. I want to stress that point: the new laws would be acceptable only if the government accepts recommendations from those affected by influx control."

Currently that is an unlikely prospect. Less than one month after the abolition of the pass laws, about 70,000 squatters from the vast Crossroads squatter complex were removed from the area in a paramilitary operation headed by conservative "old-guard" Crossroads residents and backed up by the security forces.

Then at the Lwandle township, about 50 miles from Cape Town, 172 women and children were arrested for "trespassing" in the men's hostels. The government has extended anti-squatting laws and, in terms of its orderly urbanization policy, a local magistrate may redirect homeless people to wherever "suitable" accommodation is available. Urban planning experts have pointed out that "suitable" accommodation is far more likely to be found in one of the 90 "homeland" towns than near the urban centers.

So although the pass laws are no longer on the statute books, most opposition organizations in South Africa believe the battle against racially discriminatory influx control is far from over. For its part, COSATU has said it will pressure employers to provide family housing for black workers in the cities, and it has already urged them not to register black "aliens" from the homelands. It has also threatened to use its workplace muscle if there are any moves to expel "alien" workers from the cities.

The mineworkers' challenge is, so far, the most significant flexing of that muscle. And the Black Sash's Duncan recently issued a strong warning to Western governments in a newspaper column saying, "Stop believing what government spokesmen tell them about reform and start reading the actual legislation. They would then be spared the shock and outrage that they express when it becomes clear that what is done is nothing like what is promised."

**Pippa Green** is a South African journalist who has written for the *South African Labour Bulletin*, the *Weekly Mail Johannesburg* and the *Argus of Cape Town*.

Africa Impact Visuals



Black soldiers march past South African President P.W. Botha (first row, center, with dark suit) in Johannesburg.

## Wooing the votes of whites by taking lives of blacks

By Steve Askin

HARARE, ZIMBABWE

**W**HEN WHITE SOUTH AFRICANS VOTE, black Africans die. That's the message from the South African raid late last month that killed four Zambian civilians in the Victoria Falls resort city of Livingston and left a fifth on the brink of death with a bullet lodged near her brain.

Some kind of raid had been expected ever since South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha charged two weeks earlier that Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Botswana

### SOUTHERN AFRICA

were letting African National Congress (ANC) rebels use their territory in an effort to disrupt South Africa's May 6 white election. Because such charges normally precede South African attacks, the main question in the region was: "Who will they hit?"

ANC Secretary-General Alfred Nzo saw the violence coming even earlier. "The region must expect until apartheid is destroyed that always they will be faced with the prospect of aggression," he told *In These Times* in February. "Especially during the run up to the election we can expect a lot to happen," Nzo predicted. Observers said the raid reflected South African President P.W. Botha's need to act tough in an effort to discourage voter defection to far-right opposition parties.

**"New Nats":** The ANC watched the elections with interest, chiefly to discern "to what extent is the social base of apartheid cracking," Nzo said. Some ANC organizers admit they are intrigued by the rise of a group of dissenting Afrikaners, the New Nationalists. The "New Nats" are longtime members of Botha's ruling Nationalist Party who broke with him to urge reforms.

But the ANC saw the election itself as a "parliamentary circus," emphasized ANC In-

formation and Publicity Director Thabo Mbeki. Mbeki said the voting is irrelevant because real power rests in the hands of Botha, his State Security Council, and other military bodies, not the racially exclusionary Parliament. The "New Nats" would become significant opposition, he said, only if they moved beyond reform within apartheid to demand that Botha negotiate transition to majority rule. Mbeki would take the "New Nats," or the white liberals of the Progressive Federal Party, more seriously if they recognized the elections as "an open insult to the majority of the people," and therefore boycotted.

The election is, however, significant for South Africa's neighbors, chiefly because political differences among white South Africans often occasion attacks against black neighbors.

While South Africa sponsors ongoing proxy wars against two nations, Angola and Mozambique, the forces that kill civilians in other countries—ostensibly in searches for ANC members—march to a domestic political drumbeat. In 1983 a South African air force embarrassed by the ANC's car-bombing at its downtown Pretoria headquarters retaliated by bombing a factory and a day-care center in neighboring Mozambique.

Last year, when an attempt by the British Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG) to broker South African talks with the ANC disturbed the far right, South Africa exploded the effort with attacks on civilians in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana. Planes and commandos struck the morning of the EPG's final presentation to eight South African cabinet ministers, prompting an angry Shridath Ramphal, the Commonwealth secretary-general, to demand immediate sanctions and denounce South Africa for deliberately wrecking the peace effort in "the most brutally orchestrated manner."

Late last month South Africa admitted that its forces invaded Zambian territory. But Pre-

toria said they were on a routine reconnaissance mission, came under fire from ANC guerrillas, returned fire and killed five. Facts suggested otherwise. Western journalists who rushed to the scene confirmed the Zambian government's identification of the dead as Zambian civilians: two security guards at a downtown office building and two men shot dead in their beds in a Livingston suburb. Journalists saw the injured woman, the niece of Zambia's defense minister, at a hospital, but she was barely able to talk.

**Where the rebels are:** South Africa itself is the main base for armed resistance, said an ANC spokesman. The ANC representative insisted his group maintains its external political headquarters in Zambia, but has no military personnel there, nor in the other countries threatened by Botha. Independent observers generally agree, and suggest that ANC's external military centers are located chiefly in Angola.

Zambia's internal political weakness, not ANC military strength, made it a logical target. Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda presides over what may be the least stable government in Southern Africa. Its main export, copper, is rapidly declining in value, while a drastic International Monetary Fund austerity program has probably cut real income at least by half over the past 18 months, provoking protests from the country's traditionally militant working class.

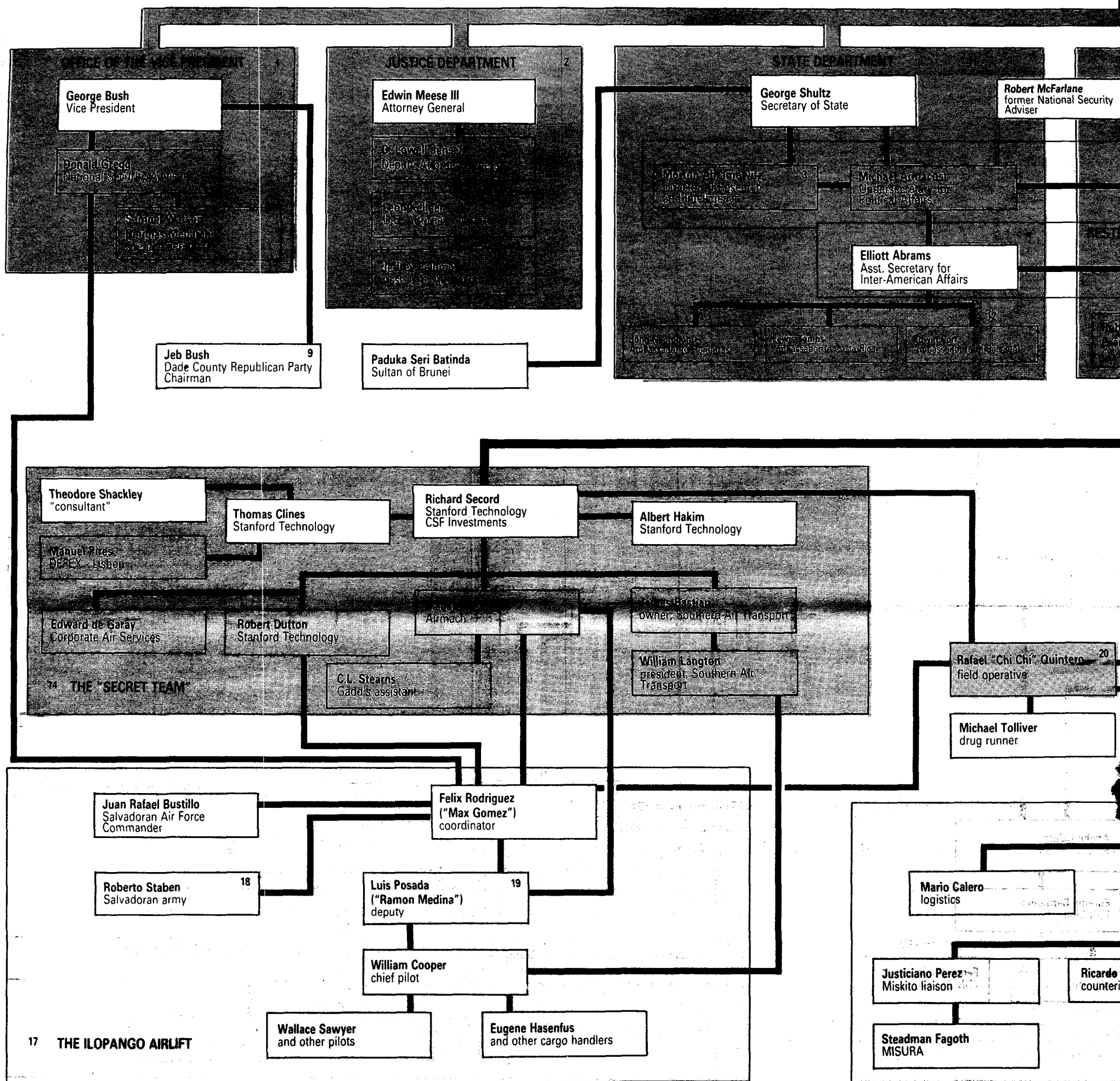
Food riots last year and a wave of strikes this year produce speculation that Kaunda could be overthrown. The Zambian leader charged the week before the raid that his opponents were plotting with South Africa to stage a coup. Kaunda's most vocal parliamentary critics are a block of conservatives within his own party who want him to ease away from the ANC and stop supporting sanctions against South Africa. They say Zambia can prosper through trade with the apartheid state.

By adding a human cost to the economic price Zambia pays for supporting the ANC, Botha may have been trying to fuel the fire of Zambian dissent while healing rifts within his own white electorate.

**Steve Askin** is *In These Times'* African correspondent.



# CONTRAGATE



## Unraveling the ties that bind

It's been said that Ronald Reagan's one act of genius was to create a conspiracy so immense that no one could possibly follow it. Faced with such an overwhelming series of revelations, the public has tended to reduce the web of illegal contra support operations to a single name: Oliver North.

North did play a crucial role—in fact, he had many more contacts than this flow chart is able to show. But North and the National Security Council (NSC) are fall-guys for an

illegal policy for which Reagan mobilized his entire foreign policy apparatus.

This chart ties together administration officials, past and present, who were involved with North in both supporting and supervisory roles. It also traces the connections between the government, the ex-military and intelligence personnel who acted as middlemen, and the various contra operations working in coordination throughout Central America.

The chart is meant to be representative,

not exhaustive. The ongoing congressional hearings will no doubt uncover more of the network, despite the efforts of damage controllers in Congress as well as the administration. But here, for the first time, is an outline of the major figures of the contra operations and their relationships. This is the scorecard without which you can't tell the players.

by Jim Naureckas

1. Bush's national security advisers had close ties to the Ilopango operation.
2. At Poindexter's request, Meese derided an investigation into the contra network.
3. Abramowitz managed a "little CIA" for the State Department.
4. The NSC was only the center of a massive interagency effort to aid the contras.
5. Casey's CIA, obsessed with covert action, remained heavily involved in the contra war despite congressional prohibitions.
6. Ikke' and Sanchez are credited with bringing the Defense Department and the CIA closer together.
7. Gorman arranged for troops on maneuvers in Honduras to build infrastructure for the contras.

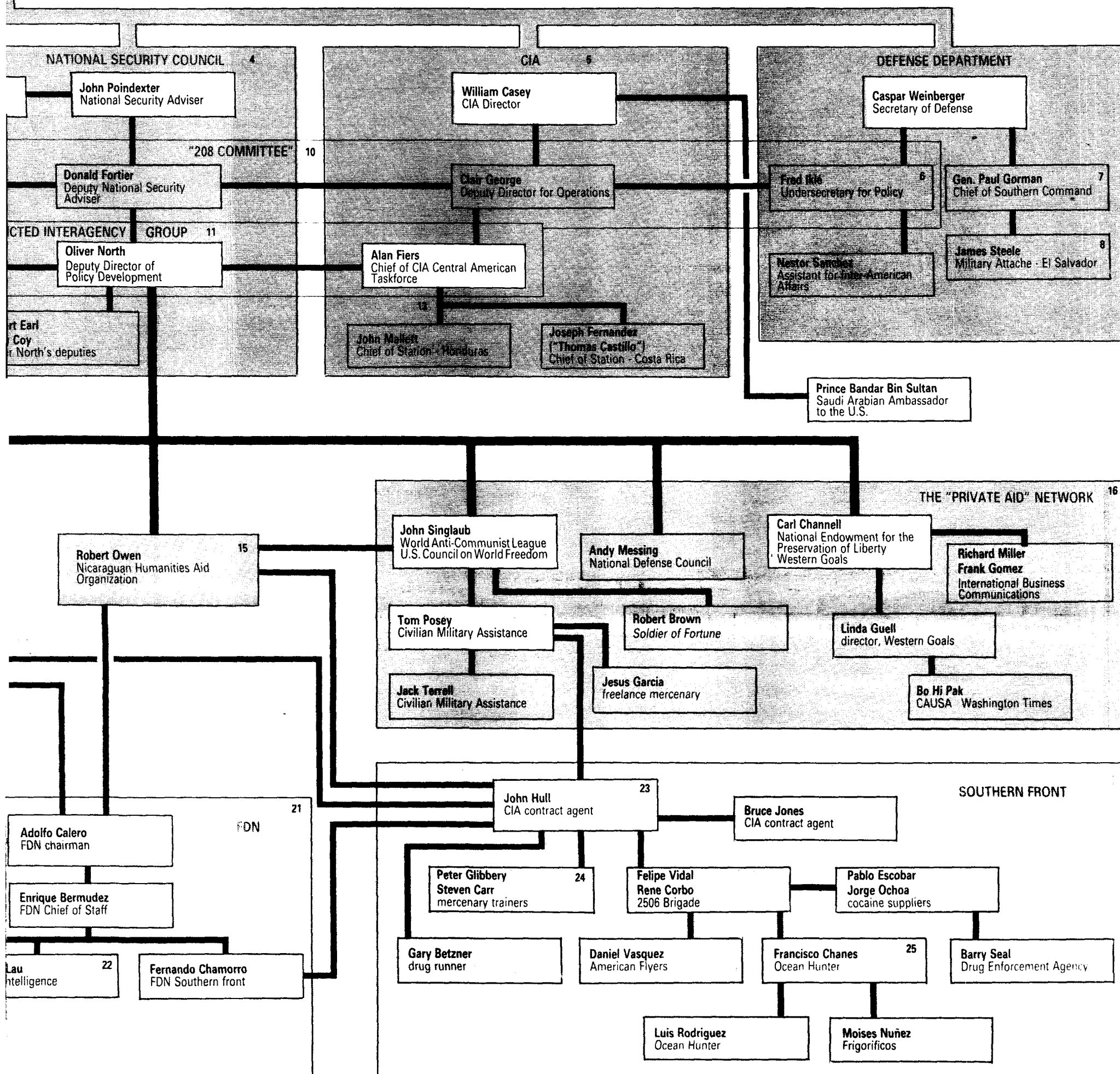


Reagan

Ident

Regan  
Staff

# SCORECARD



Miles DeCoster

8. Steele helped plan airdrops over Nicaragua.

9. George Bush's son Jeb was his father's contact with the Miami Cuban community.

10. The "208 Committee," named for the number of their conference room in the Old Executive Office Building, oversaw all of Reagan's secret wars. This group, the Washington Post wrote, would "determine which weapons will be shipped, which secret warehouse goods used, which middlemen will deliver them to clandestine airstrips. The committee also set "budgets, goals and timetables for each operation."

11. The Restricted Interagency Group had direct responsibility for the contra operation, combining the resources of State, the CIA and the NSC. The Tower Commission report names Abrams and

North as members; Alan Fiers represented the CIA.

12. U.S. ambassadors in Central America gave support to contra activities in their respective countries.

13. CIA operatives in Central America worked with North's network—the station chief in Costa Rica had to resign when the extent of his involvement became public.

14. The Secret Team used money from Iran arms sales and other sources to acquire weapons and channel them to Central America.

15. Owen, officially a consultant to the Nicaraguan Humanitarian Aid Organization, was actually North's liaison to the contras.

16. The "private aid" network provided funds,

supplies and trainers for the contras—as well as a cover for the rest of the network.

17. Under the direction of the Secret Team, this operation flew weapons from the Ilopango Air Force Base in El Salvador to contras in Honduras, Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

18. Staben, Rodriguez' liaison with the Salvadoran military, was a notorious death-squad leader. Secord intervened with President Duarte on Staben's behalf.

19. The network allegedly helped Posada in 1985 escape from a Venezuelan prison, where he was held for killing 73 in a terrorist bombing.

20. Quintero coordinated arms deliveries to the contras with the Secret Team. He also allegedly arranged drug shipments.

21. The Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), led by Somocistas, was the beneficiary of most of the network's efforts.

22. Lau reputedly arranged the assassination of El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero.

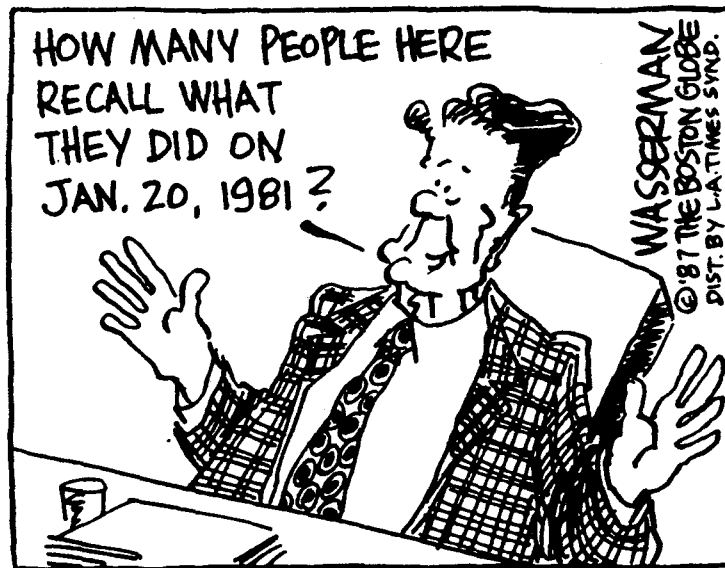
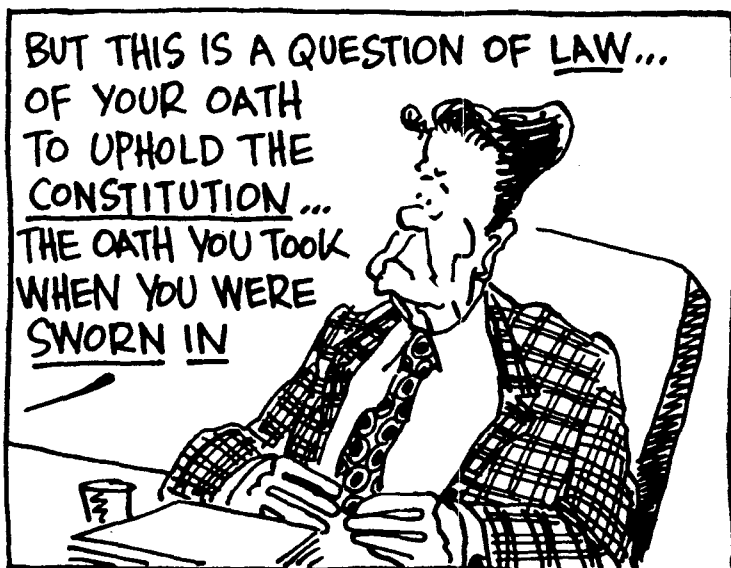
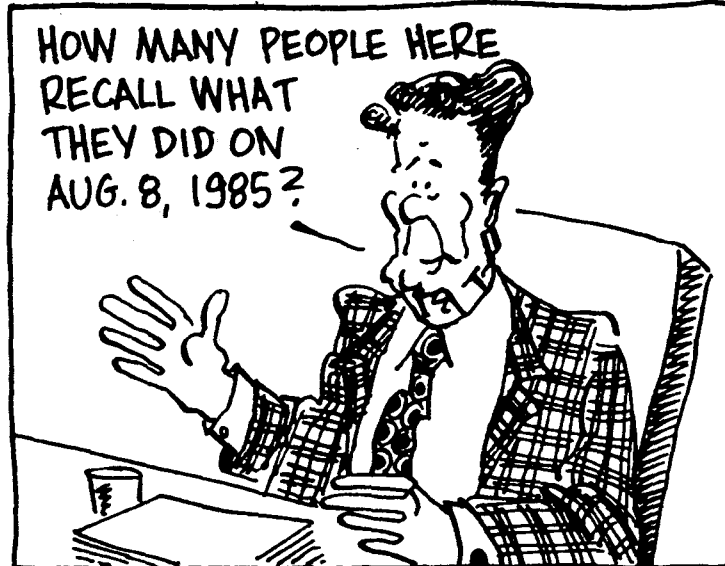
23. John Hull's ranch in Costa Rica was the command center for a southern front against Nicaragua—as well as an alleged transshipment point for Colombian cocaine.

24. Carr died under mysterious circumstances last year after revealing to congressional investigators what he knew about the contra network.

25. Chanes and Nunez are accused of using their seafood business to ship cocaine from Hull's ranch to Miami.



# EDITORIAL



## Lying: from Roosevelt's bully to Reagan's bull

When Theodore Roosevelt was preparing to run as a reformer for governor of New York in 1898, he had a secret meeting with the Republican boss of the state, Thomas Platt. As will happen in such cases, word got out about the meeting, and Roosevelt was greatly embarrassed. Desperate to deny the meeting occurred, Roosevelt called in muckraking journalist Lincoln Steffens and said, "You've got to help me. I have to deny that I 'saw' Platt. The reformers are making bonfires of my call, and I must put them out. I must write a denial."

Realizing that "there is no known literary form for denying a fact without lying," which Steffens assumed Roosevelt did not want to do, he suggested another course of action. Write out a statement of denial, set it up on your desk, he told Roosevelt "and read it before and after meals, till in a day or two you'll come to believe it yourself. Then give it out. It will be true."

Roosevelt followed Steffens' advice, convinced himself, and then the public, that he had never called on Platt—and went on to be governor and then president of the United States.

Now, almost a century later, Ronald Reagan is in the White House and he has a similar problem. One of Lt. Col. Oliver North's memos printed in the Tower Commission Report's appendix says that Reagan was informed about North's efforts to raise money to defend Eugene Hasenfus after he was shot down in Nicaragua (see *In These Times*, April 29). And White House staffers are worried that former National Security Adviser Adm. John M. Poindexter is going to testify that Reagan knew about the diversion of profits from the Iran arms deal and approved of it.

To control the damage to the president, White House aides have been poring over testimony Reagan gave to the Tower Commission. Just before the president's news conference in early March, aides warned him about Poindexter's possible testimony and suggested that it might be prudent for Reagan to say "to the best of my recollection he never told me," or "I do not recall." But Reagan knew better. "It was his decision," an unidentified presidential adviser told the *New York Times*, "to be as emphatic as he was. He is basically flat out convinced he would recall [Poindexter's briefing]."

And Reagan may prevail in the technical sense. Even if Poindexter testifies that he told the president all and got approval, White House

aides insist it will be a question of the admiral's word versus the president's, and the president will win. Without documentary proof, Congress would have no choice but to accept Reagan's version of events.

But unlike Roosevelt, Reagan has already failed to convince the public. Some two-thirds of the people already believe that the president is lying, even in the absence of legal proof. And the logic of the situation strongly supports that belief. The contras have been Reagan's passion, and hostages have been a close second. He may have been cautious enough to have told his subordinates that he didn't want to know the details, but they must also have known that they were carrying out policies closest to their leader's heart.

That's what Reagan's new White House staffers are so worried about. They know that the more these events are aired by Congress and Independent Counsel Lawrence Walsh, the more this administration's corruption will be apparent. Carl R. Channell's plea of guilty last week to charges of conspiring to defraud the government by raising tax-exempt funds to arm the contras, and his naming of North as a co-conspirator, are only the beginning.

## Waldheim's wrong march

In another case of innocence in high places, Austrian President Kurt Waldheim reacted to the Justice Department decision to put him on a list of people barred from entering the United States by saying, "In all simplicity, but with unequivocal clarity: I have a clear conscience."

That may be true, and so much greater the shame. For the evidence is clear that Waldheim, then a member of the Nazi party and a lieutenant in the Wehrmacht, served as chief assistant to the quartermaster in Kozara, Yugoslavia in 1942. In the Kozara campaign, 68,000 people, including 23,000 children, were deported to concentration camps. Most perished on forced death marches or in the camps themselves.

Waldheim was decorated for his role in that campaign, in which the quartermaster branch was responsible for processing prisoners for deportations and executions. Waldheim had long denied participating in the Kozara campaign, but later acknowledged his presence.

Although it took the Justice Department a full year to reach this decision, the administration should be applauded for its action. As in so much connected with the Holocaust, better late than never.

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# LETTERS

## When unions and management work together

I'M NOT SURE HOW THINGS WORK IN THE BIG cities, but there are small communities all around the United States that have small companies that require union membership. That is all fine and dandy. The union's role is that of spokesman and helper for the worker.

Unfortunately, in some of these small communities, it doesn't work that way. In my experience, the union and management work together to exploit the worker, and that is a terrible tragedy. Let me give an example:

Park Rapids, Minn., a tourist community of about 3,000 people, has a french fry factory that employs anywhere from 100 to 150 people. Since the pay is extremely low, often minimum wage, most of these workers are merely supplying second incomes to their families. That is, they are the husbands or wives of others who have better-paying jobs in the community. Their income, small as it is, supplements the family treasury.

However, for the single worker like myself, one has to scrape to get by on these starvation wages. My first question when I went to work at this plant, which is called Chef Reddy, was, "Why have a union at all when many of the workers are only receiving minimum wage?"

Every year the union representatives and the management at Chef Reddy sit down to discuss contracts. This is a joke. If any pay increase is agreed upon, it usually amounts to about a nickel. Yet the union sees fit to increase dues.

In my case, I started out at minimum wage, and then after 60 days had a pay increase of 40 cents an hour. This still put me well below the poverty level, but any increase is welcome. However, my generous pay raise was short-lived. I was laid off. The reason: a new policy attempt by the company to cut back on workers. My immediate supervisors, who liked my work, said the company experiments with this kind of thing off and on to try to cut down on expenses, and that I should be back to work soon.

Well, as it was, I was laid off only for a few days (along with several others) and then I was called back. But for being laid off those few days, I lost all my seniority and my pay increase. I had to start all over again.

When I protested to the union that this sort of practice, even if it was legal, was certainly unethical and not in the spirit of good worker/management relations, my letters went unanswered. The union representative on the job said he'd look into it, but did nothing. Although I continued to work, the "hassle" I caused by sticking up for my rights eventually caused me to be laid off again. This time permanently.

Tom R. Kovach  
Nevis, Minn.

## Apples

I AM GLAD TO SEE THAT IN YOUR LATEST ARTICLE on computers (*ITT*, April 15), John B. Judis gave the Macintosh more credit than in his last one, although I would have liked to see more emphasis on the point that the pioneering ideas Apple had the foresight to

put into it have finally received the imprimatur of IBM.

What puzzles me is Judis' continuing bias toward Big Blue, which may seriously mislead your readers who have not yet gotten computers but are considering it. Why not more discussion of the potentialities of the Macintosh as a tool for social change, rather than reiterating the old "expensive toy/effective business machine" cliché, which no longer has even the tenuous connection to reality that it once had?

After all, most *In These Times* readers are not purchasing agents for giant corporations, presumably, so why should they be concerned about "business machines," when the Macintosh has always been clearly preferable for "the rest of us" because of its versatility and ease of use (although in the past it was a bit expensive compared to some IBM clones)?

We who got our Macs long ago have already been enjoying for some time now features that buyers of the new IBMs will see imitations of months from now. If I were advising prospective first-time computer users, I would tell them not to wait—pick up a cheap used 512 Mac (now that the new Macs are out, they should be plentiful) and enjoy!

Jon Johanning  
Philadelphia

## IBM

I READ WITH INTEREST JOHN B. JUDIS' PIECE (*ITT*, April 15) on the new IBM product line. I think you missed some important implications of IBM's decision to close up their architecture because you tended to assess the situation from IBM's corporate viewpoint.

Before IBM came into the microcomputing field, I was a senior technician servicing Kaypro 2 machines. The Tandon drives were made in America, and were absolutely pieces of junk. So the first point is that you have to consider quality before you start dumping on foreign parts.

The second point is that IBM opened up microcomputing markets to people with good ideas but zero resources, such as myself. But IBM did not do this because they are nice guys; they did it by accident. With the emergence of a standard in the last three years, life has become much easier for people like me.

And the new product line proves the point—they are closing up the architecture and encouraging software development for a closed system. Far from liberating office workers, as your article almost suggests, it will retard the development of grassroots microcomputer innovation. I just hope that the present standard has a strong enough

base so that the new proprietary IBM architecture will twist slowly in the wind. Otherwise, we will all be paying three times more, and half of the available software won't run on half the available computers.

Daniel Brandt  
Arlington, Va.

**Editor's note:** Daniel Brandt has indexed on four computer disks over 28,000 groups and individuals whose actions bear on American foreign policy and the CIA. Brandt's database (available from Micro Associates, Box 5369, Arlington, VA 22205 for \$35) is invaluable for anybody writing about the current Contra-Iran scandal.

## Contracted peonage

WHILE IT DOES NOT SURPRISE ME THAT EACH journal describing itself as a member of the left in the U.S. has its own particular agenda, I have been considerably disappointed with the disparity of your recent preoccupations.

Given the page-two story on the FBI (*ITT*, April 22), I am forced to ask who sets the agenda of the paper? We have been bombarded in the main left and liberal weeklies with an endless fusillade of Irangate, Reaganisms and AFL-CIO stories.

Yet neither *In These Times* nor *The Nation*, the *Guardian* or a number of other major critical papers has dealt seriously with the case of "Baby M" (*Stern v. Whitehead*). This issue has shown again that the American left "cornados" itself on the compromises of progressivism and pragmatism.

At the heart of the *Baby M* case and its result are some very fundamental issues about the relationship the majority of residents of the U.S. (not to mention other countries) have to "middle-class" aspirations. That *ITT* had no serious critique of the argument that "children's custody is really ownership" and that "surrogacy" is contracted peonage—like most so-called contracts in a capitalist society—is intellectually disappointing, to say the least.

The left in the U.S. by and large took the position that a "middle-class" development is the right of every child, and therefore Sara Whitehead should be Melissa Stern. It was only a convenient corollary that feminist professionals were embarrassed by the whole case. As long as you refuse to critique the "good" of middle class as a basis for politics, it seems that such gross omissions are likely to continue—much to the detriment of this country.

Pat Wilkinson-Bus  
Associate Director, Institute for  
Advanced Cultural Studies

**Editor's note:** In a page-three story March 18, and in two subsequent editorials on the *Baby M* case, we discussed just the issue Pat Wilkinson-Bus raises. But we haven't seen anyone argue that "children's custody is really ownership," and we do not believe that surrogacy, much less most contracts, is "contracted peonage." We did criticize the judge in the case for conducting a trial in which a middle-class lifestyle was presented—and accepted by the court—as superior to a working-class lifestyle, and as a basis for awarding custody to the Sterns. And we stated that the question of surrogacy was a matter of public policy and should not be reduced to contractual relations, but should be decided by the legislature after serious debate involving the public.

## Sideline

DEBORAH FINK'S COMMENTS ON THE FAMILY FARM Act (*Letters*, April 1) echo the familiar refrain of those who refuse to fight any battle that will not in itself win the greater war.

It is true that the Family Farm Act is not major land reform legislation. On the other hand, it will clearly stop the unprecedented financial failure of the mid-sized, full-time commercial family farmers. This failure has been the major factor in the current trend toward greater concentration of our natural resources in the hands of a few wealthy investors.

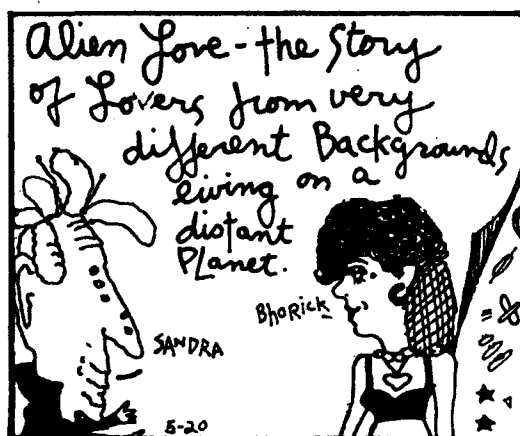
It is not true that the bill does not promote innovation. The Family Farm Act provides a mechanism for those who are willing to reduce or end their use of chemicals—and therefore their level of production—to be able to farm more of their land than those still using chemicals intensively. This is a major provision recognizing not only the cost of chemicals in over-production, but also the effect of chemicals on the water tables throughout the farm belt. It will serve as a major incentive to change and improve farming practices.

It is easy to sit on the sidelines and criticize the efforts of those struggling to find solutions, even partial ones. Fink offers no alternative.

Leland Beatty  
Director, Farmer Assistance Programs  
Department of Agriculture  
Austin, Texas

**Editor's note:** Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letter—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

## SYLVIA



## by Nicole Hollander



## Low state taxes don't improve business climate

By Kip Sullivan

**D**URING THE PAST DECADE, BIG BUSINESS and other conservative groups have campaigned for cuts in state taxes. Their major argument is that cuts are needed to "improve the business climate"—to create or save jobs.

The low-taxes-creates-jobs argument was first successfully peddled in the '20s in the South. By the '50s, business lobbyists were aggressively promoting a taxes-jobs connection in virtually every state capital. But the Northern and Western states remained relatively immune until the '70s, when economic insecurity, created by the 1974-75 recession—the worst since the Great Depression—and by the even more damaging 1981-82 recession, made Frostbelt legislators and citizens more vulnerable. By 1978, the "business climate" issue dominated gubernatorial and state legislative campaigns around the country.

"Business climate" rhetoric at the state level functions the same way "supply-side" and "free market" talk does at the federal level. It justifies tax cuts in general and cuts in progressive taxes in particular (a progressive tax is one that takes relatively more from the wealthy than from the poor). Reagan supply-siders damaged low-income and middle-income people both by raising their share of the tax burden and cutting domestic programs. Similarly, "business climate" advocates at the state level hurt av-

erage taxpayers by shifting the tax burden onto them while justifying freezes or cuts in social expenditures.

In anticipation of the tax reform debate in Minnesota's legislature—scheduled to take place this spring—I examined the evidence for the claim that differences in state and local tax levels affect state employment levels. The study, released by Minnesota Citizens Organization To Act Together (COACT) last August, devotes considerable attention to Minnesota's taxes (they are among the highest in the nation) and the performance of Minnesota's economy (it has been one of the strongest in the country since the Depression). But it also consists of a review of research on this issue over the last 50 years.

All state governments have an interest in knowing what factors affect business location and investment decisions. And this research is quite consistent in its finding: state and local taxes have no detectable influence on business location and investment decisions. This is true both of studies that have sought to discern a statistical correlation between various measures of economic growth and tax levels, as well as those that base their conclusions on surveys of business people.

**No correlation:** Here are just three examples of statements economists make about the alleged relationship between jobs and state and local taxes:

"...The overwhelming consensus is that tax and fiscal concessions rarely have much effect on interstate or interregional choices of industrial location" (Cornia, Testa and Stocker, 1978);

"...Interstate variations in business income taxes have had little impact on the relocation of businesses..." (Vaughan, 1979);

"My own data...add weight to the general view that the taxation and financing schemes developed by government entities have only a minimal effect on the selection of new plant locations" (Schmenner, 1982).

There are two main reasons why state and local taxes have so little negative impact on state economies. First, state and local taxes make up a small portion of all business costs. The taxes paid by business—mainly corporate income, property, sales and unemployment insurance—amount to 3 to 4 percent of the total cost of running the average U.S. firm. Differences in tax burdens between states comprise an even smaller fraction of costs—perhaps 1 to 2 percent on average.

Second, calculating those differences is difficult to do with any precision because state and local tax structures are complex. Precision becomes even more elusive if one attempts to factor in differences between states in the value of goods and services financed by taxes, goods and services that directly reduce business costs (e.g., education, roads, ports, sewers, police and fire protection) or that enhance local demand for business output (e.g., promotion of tourism).

**Major influences:** There is some consensus in the literature that the strength of local markets is the single most important factor influencing location decisions. The local or regional demand for a business' product is in turn a function of population and income growth. According to General Motors, its decision to open its Saturn plant in Tennessee is an example of a market-influenced decision. The South has been the beneficiary of a population shift out of the North, especially the Northeast, that accelerated remarkably in the '70s.

The cost and quality of the local labor force ranks with local markets as the other major location factor. This is hardly surprising. Labor costs amount to 60 percent of production costs, 15 to 20 times the proportion attributable to state and local tax costs. It was the South's cheap labor, not its low taxes, that induced Northern manufacturers to relocate or branch into the South over the last half century.

Unfortunately for the South, many of the firms lured there by low wages are now either moving on to Third World nations where labor is much less expensive or are laying off workers in response to low-wage competition from abroad. On the other hand, the South's low-tax policy and its necessarily low levels of investment in education and infrastructure have left it poorly prepared to replace the low-wage jobs it is losing. According to Stuart Rosenfeld of the Southern Growth Policies Board, a non-profit organization created by 13 Southern states and Puerto Rico, Southerners are "starting to realize that education in the

future is going to be a stronger factor in both attracting and keeping business than a small differential in tax rates."

Secondary factors influencing location decisions include transportation, land and energy costs, climate, quality of life—crime rates, cleanliness of the environment, availability of recreational and cultural facilities—and access to raw materials

All this is not to say that taxes never influence an entrepreneur's decision to move jobs across state borders. Tax differences play a role for some firms, especially where the choice is between two sites in close proximity. In that situation, factors that normally dictate location decisions

**Conservatives argue for low taxes "to save jobs," but the evidence shows that several other factors are more important to business.**

may be "tied," leaving tax differences to play the role of tie-breaker. In any case, tax-induced moves are so few they have an imperceptible impact on job growth.

Throughout most of the last 50 years, business taxes have taken the brunt of the attack on state and local taxes. But over the last decade individual income taxes have taken at least as much heat as business taxes, especially in states like New York, Delaware, Minnesota and Wisconsin that rely more heavily on this tax than most.

The argument that individual taxes hurt job growth has received little attention. Of three studies I have found, only one claims to find a correlation between personal taxes and job growth. That study was done by Michael Wasylenko for the Minnesota Tax Study Commission in 1984.

The Wasylenko study claimed to find a negative relation between a state's personal income tax burden and job growth in three sectors of the economy—wholesale trade, retail trade and FIRE (finance, insurance and real estate). But the correlation Wasylenko found is so weak that it would take an enormous cut in income taxes to create even a few jobs. For Minnesota, Wasylenko determined that a 10 percent cut in state income taxes would add only 4,500 jobs to Minnesota's two million plus jobs, and this over a seven-year period. Meanwhile, according to his data, if this cut were financed entirely by reductions in education expenditures, the net effect would be job loss.

Despite the absence of empirical evidence supporting the claim that states can stimulate their economies by cutting taxes, state legislatures everywhere are acting as if the claim were true. This "second war between the states," as *Business Week* dubbed it nine years ago, will continue as long as the taxes-hurt-jobs myth remains widely accepted.

**Kip Sullivan** is the jobs campaign director for Minnesota COACT and author of *Understanding the "Business Climate" Debate*.

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## Reaganism spurs new-style mergers

Corporate mergers have been with us since the widespread adoption of the corporate form in the 19th century. But mergers do not occur evenly over time; they come in big waves.

The first great merger wave—1897-1903—created the highly concentrated industrial structure we still have today. A second wave—1926-29—sharply increased the degree of vertical integration of large companies, as many giants acquired their major suppliers. The third wave—1966-69—consisted mainly of conglomerate mergers. It gave birth to highly diversified entities like LTV Corporation and International Telephone and Telegraph.

We are now in the midst of a fourth merger wave. Beginning around 1981 the pace of merger activity picked up noticeably—although noticing it took some work, since the Reagan administration discontinued collection of merger activity data in that year. That move was part of the administration's effort to eliminate "unnecessary" data collection. They did not view mergers as a matter for public concern.

After rising gradually from 1975 to 1980, the number of reported mergers jumped by 46 percent in 1981 to a level of 2,314, while assets involved rose by 86 percent to \$82.6 billion. The merger rate appears to have peaked in 1985 at 3,001 mergers, with assets valued at \$179.8 billion. The figures for 1986 are not yet available, but preliminary reports suggest a slight drop from the 1985 rate.

This latest wave has produced mergers that dwarf previous acquisitions in asset size. The largest was Standard Oil of California's takeover of Gulf Oil for \$13.3 billion in 1984, with the \$10.1 billion Texaco-Getty pairing of that same year the runner-up. Among non-oil companies recent giant mergers include Philip Morris General Foods (\$5.8 billion, 1985), Burroughs Sperry (\$4.4 billion, 1986) and General Motors Hughes Aircraft (\$5.2 billion, 1985).

Conservative analysts generally view mergers with enthusiasm, while the strongest critique of mergers has come from the populist tradition. But the issue of mergers—and the related larger issue of concentration of economic power under capitalism—has always been a sticky problem for American socialists. Should corporate mergers be viewed as a part of the process of increasing socialization of production, which, according to Marx and Engels, is supposed to prepare the way for socialism? An early socialist newspaper wrote, at the height of the first merger wave, that socialists "are not making the revolution"; rather, "It would be nearer the truth to say that [J.P.] Morgan and [David] Rockefeller are making it." By contrast, socialists at times have taken a position closer to the populist one, condemning the centralization of economic power under capitalism. In Leninist analyses, monopoly has been associated with fascism, war and imperialism.

Analyzing the current merger wave may be helpful for developing a socialist position on mergers.

**Why corporations merge:** A variety of motives may lead one corporation to acquire another. A merger creates a larger firm, and large firms have certain competitive advantages over small firms, such as economies of

## EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

By David Kotz

scale in production, access to cheaper credit. Merging with competitors may lead to monopoly power and hence monopoly profits. Also, mergers may be more advantageous than internal investment because internal expansion within the industry may depress prices by increasing supply. In addition, firms acquired may offer gains in knowledge and experience for expanding outside the acquiring firm's traditional industry base.

There may also be speculative gains from mergers. Speculation refers to buying an existing asset in the hope that its value will increase, permitting the buyer to reap the gain from this increase. Partly through accounting tricks and peculiarities in the tax laws, an acquiring firm may reap capital gains or tax savings, despite the absence of any increase in real pretax profits resulting from the merger. A firm making a string of acquisitions that create the illusion of growth finds its stock price rises as a result. This facilitates more acquisitions financed by trading its stock for the target company's stock. A self-reinforcing upward spiral ensues, which enriches company insiders who hold large blocks of stock—providing they sell in time.

The speculative gains associated with mergers do not accrue only to the owners of the acquiring firm. Various outsiders may benefit, legally or illegally. A recent Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) study of 172 tender offers from 1981 to 1985 found that in every single case the stock price of the target company rose abnormally at least three weeks before the bid was made public. Those with the right connections appear able to position themselves for speculative gains when mergers take place.

Commercial and investment banks that play a role in the merger process gain both from selling services associated with mergers and, potentially, from use of insider information that comes into their possession. And these institutions may have the power to encourage mergers among firms they are associated with. Banks have played a central role in all the great merger waves, including the present one. The Standard Oil/Gulf merger was possible only because banks loaned \$14 billion to Standard for this purpose.

**Why the merger wave?** The three previous merger waves took place amidst con-

ditions of economic prosperity and a booming stock market, both of which are favorable for merger activity. But the current merger wave began in 1981, during the worst postwar recession and amidst a chronically depressed stock market. Yet the early '80s offered favorable conditions for mergers, despite the depressed economy and stock market.

It is no accident that this merger wave began in the oil industry. The second wave of oil price shocks took place in 1979. The oil price boost, in addition to transferring resources from the industrialized capitalist countries to the oil producing countries, also transferred surplus value from other sectors of capital to the oil capitalists within the industrialized capitalist world. The big American oil companies found themselves flush with funds, receiving more than 30 percent of all manufacturing profits at one point.

Oil industry spokesmen had often insisted that high oil prices would be beneficial, setting off a scramble to find more oil sources, thus expanding world supplies. But to a large extent, the oil prospectors scrambled to buy up one another's existing reserves by merging. It was remarked at the time that, given high oil prices and depressed stock prices, the best place to prospect for oil was not in the Persian Gulf or Texas but on Wall Street.

Oil companies, finding that they had more revenues than they could possibly plow back into internal expansion, not only bought one another; they also bought promising non-oil companies, exemplified by Mobil's purchase of Montgomery Ward. And profitable non-oil companies, determined to partake of the oil feast, bought oil companies; the DuPont Conoco and U.S. Steel Marathon acquisitions are examples. Thus, mergers involving oil companies were a major part of the rising merger trend. A few years later other factors rose in importance, but even as late as 1984 nearly one-third of the mergers (by assets) involved companies in the oil refining or oil and mining sectors.

Reagan administration antitrust policy also promoted mergers after 1981. During the post-World War II period the antitrust authorities had generally forbidden mergers between sizeable competitors in al-

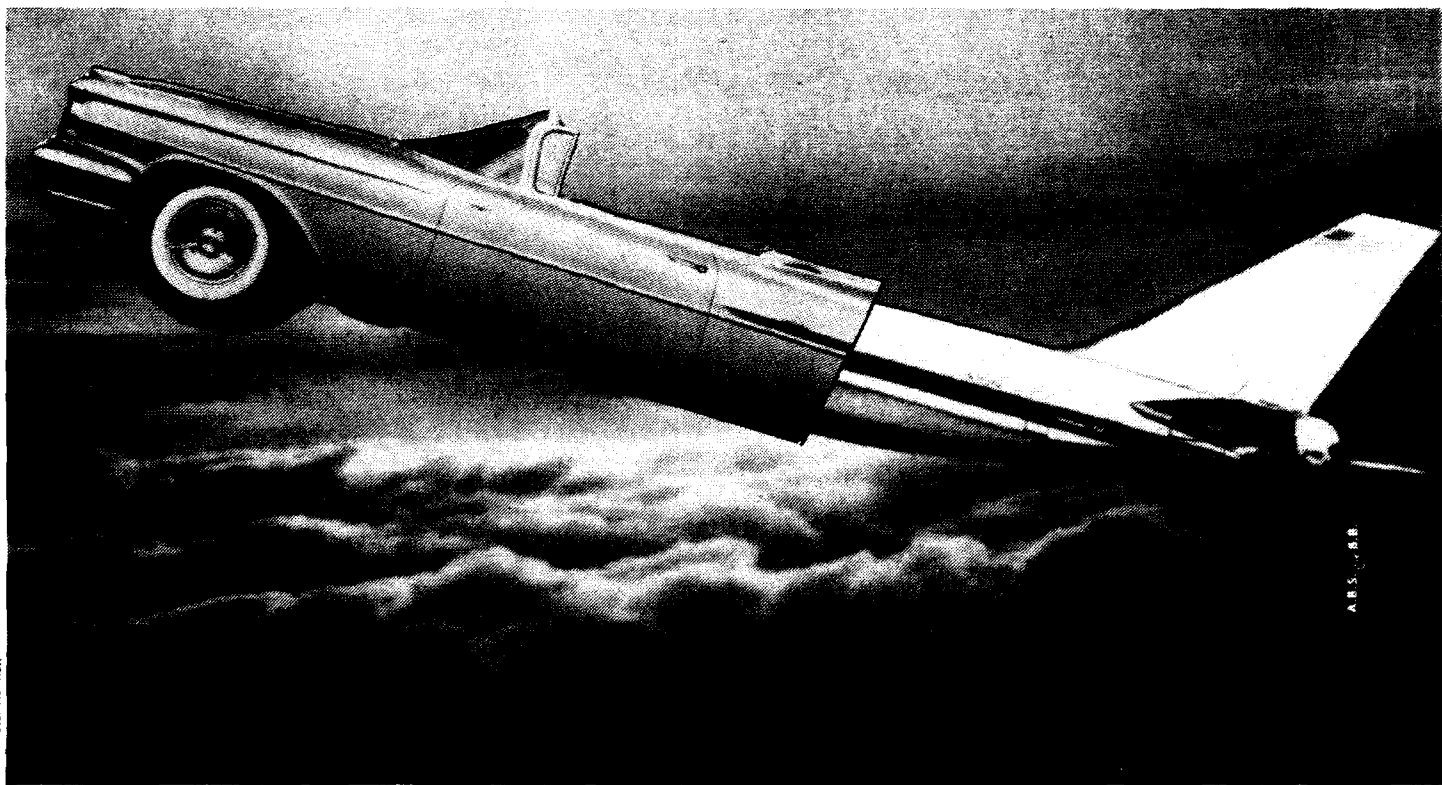
ready concentrated industries. This was true under Republican as well as Democratic administrations. In fact, Republican support for antitrust enforcement had been quite strong, reflecting fear on the part of its small business constituency of being gobbled up by larger capitalists. While it was mainly "horizontal" mergers, between potential competitors, that were strictly watched, in some cases vertical mergers were also stopped by the authorities. In the '60s the Justice Department even took some actions, under Nixon, against conglomerate mergers.

Upon taking office, the Reagan administration announced that free market policies would be applied to mergers. Strict guidelines prohibiting most horizontal mergers were dropped. The idea behind this stance was that monopoly power could never survive in free markets, since private establishment of monopoly power would simply attract new firms into the market, competing away any temporary monopoly profits.

Administration policy of deregulating previously regulated industries, such as airlines, railroads, trucking and banking, also removed obstacles to mergers in those industries. Each has experienced a big merger wave, with airlines rapidly heading toward a tight oligopoly of a few giant lines. In ground transportation, despite the completion of the transcontinental railroad over a century ago, no single company had ever operated a coast-to-coast ground transport system. But the recent takeover by Union Pacific of the fifth largest trucking company, Overnite Transportation, finally broke that barrier.

As the recession of 1981-82 ended and the economy began to expand, and as the stock market began its long climb in 1983, the merger wave picked up force from the factors that have traditionally stimulated great merger waves. Rising stock prices facilitated the financing of mergers. Growing investor optimism facilitated the gaining of speculative profits from mergers. And the rising profits from the business expansion became available for acquisitions. The administration's tax and spending policies, which exacerbated inequality and assured rising wealth for the rich, helped fuel the stock and commodity market booms, creating the atmosphere appropriate to a high level of merger activity.

*Next month: the effects of the merger wave and policy implications.*





## Scrutinizing the Poles of contention

**Poland: Socialist State, Rebellious Nation**

By Ray Taras

Westview Press, 178 pp., \$27.50

**By Kenneth Zapp and Magda Paleczny-Zapp**

**March 19:** The official trade unions sanctioned by the government warn against new price increases on food, utility services and other consumer items. The real incomes of Polish workers have already fallen too far.

**March 24:** The government lowers the degree of the price increases but says that the economy can no longer subsidize consumers. Rational economic reform requires that prices reflect the costs of products and services.

**March 30:** Lech Walesa calls for new strikes against the price increases. Other Solidarity leaders make similar assertions but are vague about specific strategies.

**April 2:** The government announces dramatic changes for the economy. Among them is the proposal to sell stock in state enterprises to citizens.

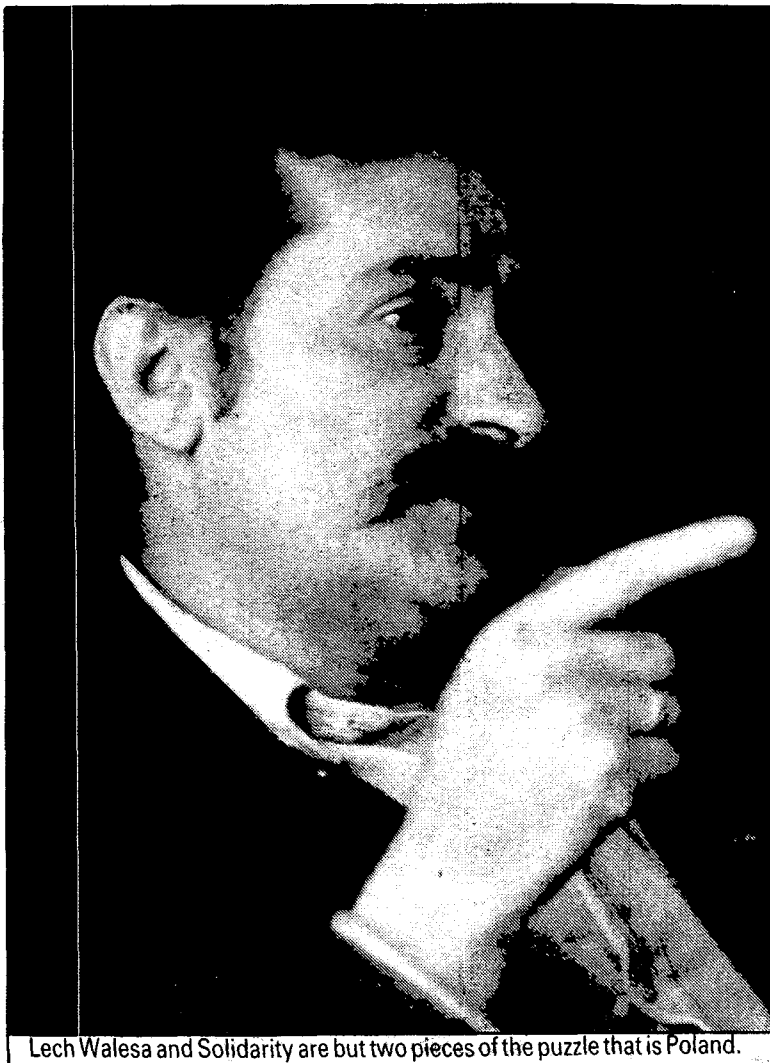
**April 10:** The *Wall Street Journal* quotes Polish economists who say the reforms being discussed would lead to widespread bankruptcies and unemployment.

**A**mericans no longer seem surprised by such reports from Poland. Ideologues on the right simply blame the Soviet Union or communism in general for Poland's misery, whatever the issue. Others less concerned with scoring political points frequently attribute such behaviors, whether seen as heroism or folly, to some quirk of the Polish character that seems immune to external influences.

Those more interested in the needs of the Poles themselves or the goals of a sane American policy toward their country would be well served by reading *Poland: Socialist State, Rebellious Nation* by Ray Taras. While Taras wisely avoids prescriptions for Poland's exit from her economic crisis, his book lays the foundation for the formulation of a positive response by the U.S.

Taras points out that Franklin Roosevelt once said that "Poland was the headache of the West," and Stalin added that "communism fits Poland like a saddle fits a cow." Metternich was even more wary of the Poles:

*"Polonism is only a formula, the sound of a word underneath which hides a revolution in its most glaring form; it is not a small part of a revolution, but revolution itself. Polonism does not declare war on the monarchies which possess*



Lech Walesa and Solidarity are but two pieces of the puzzle that is Poland.

*Polish territory, it declares war on all existing institutions and proclaims the destruction of all the common foundations which form the basis of society."*

Understanding these various responses requires knowledge of Polish history, which is considered to begin in 966 with Poland's official conversion to Christianity. To his great credit, Taras makes this long journey relatively painless for non-historians. More importantly, the lessons drawn are clear and key to the contemporary puzzle.

Taras stresses that Poland's internal development and external relations have always been constrained by its geo-political position between the Germans and Russians. Poland's conflicts with these nations predate our current "isms" by centuries and give meaning to the disdain Poles express for their eastern and western neighbors. Ironically, both East and West blocs ignore these sentiments in attempts to win the hearts and minds of Poles. Consequently, both fail.

The author carries the geo-political conflict into an analysis of the instability of Poland's government.

*The official state ideology, Marxism-Leninism, is a hybrid of the thought and traditions of Poland's two chief historical adversaries—Russia and Germany. It is hard to imagine a doctrine emanating from a source more alien to Poland than this composite of Germanic idealism and Russian opportunism.*

His chapter on the actual prac-

tice of Poland's government since 1945, including what he calls six challenges to its authority, is second only to Neal Ascherson's brilliant work in *Polish August*. Taras' unique contribution to this topic, however, may be that he takes care to stress that Polish animosity to-

**Taras stresses that Polish animosity to Marxism-Leninism does not flow from a preference for capitalism.**

ward Marxism-Leninism does not flow from a preference for capitalism. He provides extensive survey research data that shows strong support for social ownership of enterprise and socialist public policies. He writes that Poles seem pulled in different directions by their historical consciousness, Catholic morality, socialist ideology and industrial-social materialism.

**Premature democrats?** While other historical lessons abound, Taras devotes special attention to the confederationist nature of Polish political development. Local aristocrats had gained so much power in the functioning of the Polish monarchy during the middle ages that each of them had an effective veto over the selection of the king and his policies.

This tradition led to the belief that Poles had an ethical imperative to challenge central authority when it was thought to be in error. We can praise the Poles for their pioneering efforts in democracy, but Taras correctly explains that this weakened the central government so that it could not meet cru-

### POLAND

cial international challenges in the 18th and 19th centuries. One result was that Poland disappeared from the map for 125 years.

This localized orientation of Polish democracy explains Metternich's fear of the Poles, but also Solidarity's anarchistic structure and processes. The trade union was most effective when it acted on local issues and when it was simply against a government policy. When it tried to act on a national issue or when it was forced to provide recommendations for the entire economy it was much less successful.

This is not to suggest that such tasks were in any way easy. But when consensus was not reached, or when local groups had different priorities from those of the national organization, discipline was usually lost. In so doing, it can be argued, Poles were only acting out their moral imperative to do what they thought the nation needed, regardless of whether the majority or even their members disagreed. Earlier, such localism gave the advantage to the organized forces outside the country, Russia, Germany and Austria. Now it gave it to the Party.

Taras does not criticize Solidarity for such faults, which is understandable, given the huge obstacles it faced. As a result, however, Taras fails to explore the diversity of views within Solidarity on economic issues and offers little analysis of the union's processes.

Two issues related to economic reform in Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe deserve comment. First, Taras wrongly claims that Polish workers contradicted themselves by supporting worker management and greater managerial autonomy from the state. Yugoslav workers provided impetus for reform in the '60s by supporting the decentralization of authority—shifting control from the government to enterprise decision-makers. They correctly saw worker management being achieved in two steps: from the state to the enterprise and, inside the enterprise, from management to the process of self-management. Worker self-government, as it is called in Poland, will likely be realized only after enterprises are freed from the bureaucratic state control.

Also, Taras does not address the possibility that a strong central government is needed in order for real decentralization from a central planning system to occur. A weak political leader quickly depends on the very bureaucracy that needs to be abolished. Yugoslavia's Marshal Tito was strong enough to insist that significant change take place. The obvious problem is that most strong leaders find their power very comfortable and lose their urgency for economic change. This is perhaps a partial explanation for the ambivalent feeling many Poles have toward Polish leader Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski. He is strong enough to make changes but also strong enough to preserve the status quo.

The military, more than any other institution or group in Poland, had in the past been viewed as representative of Poland's best interests. Even the Catholic Church was tainted with self-interest on some issues. Taras explains why the Poles feared a Soviet invasion much less than we did and how the system's income distribution won broad support.

Taras sees changed relations with the Soviet Union as the only hope for Poland. He believes that a pragmatic Kremlin leader could improve state-society relations in Poland to a greater extent than the periodic exhortations of Lech Walesa, the moderating efforts of the church or the activities of Solidarity's dwindling underground network.

Thus we witness Jaruzelski embracing Gorbachov's reform program and proposing what can only be considered radical economic proposals while the leaders in Czechoslovakia and East Germany scurry to protect themselves from such heresy. All does not, however, depend on Moscow. Already we hear "experts" in Washington predicting Gorbachov's inevitable failure—either by resignation to the power of the Soviet bureaucracy or overthrow by it. These people seem to want him to fail, just as our politicians rejected the Polish bid for a nuclear-free zone in central Europe (including the two Germanies) in 1957. Taras is clear on this. Reducing East-West tensions will help Poland by giving leaders in the Kremlin and Warsaw wider options. Unfortunately for the Poles, American policy in the '80s has, as Taras writes, "inadvertently pushed the country further into the Soviet camp than at any time since 1956. Likewise, it has severely reduced foreign policy options available to the present Polish leadership." ■

**Kenneth Zapp** teaches in the graduate program in management at St. Paul, Minnesota's Metropolitan State University. **Magda Paleczny-Zapp** teaches in the department of economics and business at Macalester College.



### Another Day of Life

By Ryszard Kapuscinski  
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich,  
136 pp., \$14.95

By Pat Aufderheide

# Living one day at a time inside the Third World

**I**F RYSZARD KAPUSCINSKI, A VETERAN Polish journalist who covers the Third World, were American, he might have become a gonzo-journalism star. Instead, his books cross the line between reporting and literature at a different juncture, walking you past checkpoints and headlines into the felt experience of a First World person coming to understand the Third World.

There's no junk-food in the writing, of the kind that the brilliant P.J. O'Rourke uses for fuel to get us past our primitivist prejudices about far-away places in *Rolling Stone*; and no quaint exoticism of the kind the *New York Times* reserves for its page-four features. Kapuscinski's also no V.S. Naipaul, bleakly looking down his nose at the Third World wreckage, nor a Vargas Llosa waging intellectual turf battles on journalistic ground. He's a working intellectual, a serious journalist (quite famous in Poland) who can not only get the scoop but understand how little it tells you of what's really happening.

We started learning about his work with the peculiar little book *The Emperor*, a fable-like account of the decline and fall of Haile Selassie's court told by the courtiers. Kapuscinski, who had diligently filed telexes throughout several crises in Ethiopia, wove his bank of interviews and memories into an oral-history narrative that was close—how close? became the controversy—to fiction.

Then came *Shah of Shahs*, a recounting in elegiac prose-poetry of the fabulous, and fabulously cruel last days of the Shah. Once again fairy-tale-like in the narrative (but this time in Kapuscinski's own voice), *Shah of Shahs* was highly imagistic in its portrayal of an Iran whose entire society was a Potemkin village of development. The book implicitly challenged the acres of newsprint cranked out by the mainstream press on the Iranian revolution.

**Spinning word-pictures:** Unlike, say, *Wall Street Journal* reporter Jonathan Kwitny's excellent survey of U.S. intervention in Third World *Endless Enemies*, Kapuscinski doesn't analyze. He spins word-pictures, scenarios, characters whose very existence forces you to rethink subjects and places that had been neatly slotted into files labeled "terrorism," "Islamic fundamentalism" or just plain "trouble spot." If the tone is once-upon-a-time, it's anything but exotic.

In his latest book, *Another Day of Life*, the voice of the storyteller is far less distant. This record of his time spent in Angola just before and during Angolan independence from Portuguese rule in 1975 fo-

cuses on the link between reporter and subject. As he writes at the outset, "This is a very personal book, about being alone and lost."

If you need brush-up on Angola it's best to turn elsewhere first—for instance to Kwitny's "Angola" chapter, or even more briefly, to the entry in that invaluable almanac *Third World Guide 1986-1987*. This account, a retrospective diary, assumes a basic familiarity with current international affairs.

He starts where international journalists always start—at the hotel. But Kapuscinski arrived before the pack; he records the

## AFRICA

panicky evacuation of the city by the colonials. He captures the ever-present stink of fear, and creates a magnificent image in the transformation of the "stone city" of Luanda into a city of crates, which then sails away. "Afterward the wind blows and the sand drifts over the traces of the last survivor."

But Angola goes on, although the fighting factions all politely walk around the abandoned colonial remains—including abandoned trucks, with a cautious respect for private property. Kapuscinski goes to war, offering on the way a tongue-in-cheek guide to checkpoint etiquette. Checkpoints are impromptu

**"Every town in Angola looked like a ghastly, corroding movie set built on the outskirts of Hollywood and already abandoned by the film crew."**

**—Ryszard Kapuscinski  
*Another Day of Life***

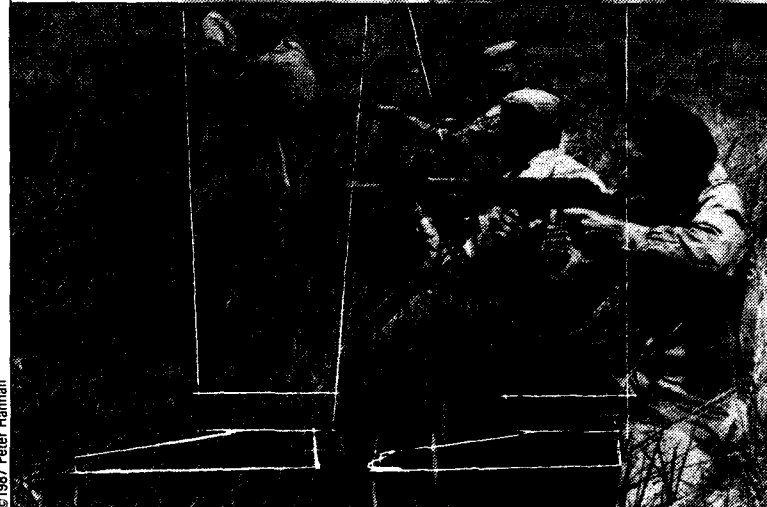
tu affairs—one consists of an old wardrobe whose mirror is aimed at the oncoming driver—controlled by different factions, but unlabeled. The visitor's job is to emerge from the car—slowly—with the appropriate greeting. To say "comrade" when the faction greets each other as "brother," for instance, is sudden death.

**The road less traveled:** Kapuscinski clears the hurdles, and finds a war being waged on terms that may remind recent moviegoers of *Platoon*: terrified new recruits blasting away not at enemies but at their own terror. And then he

sets out, luckily ignorant at the outset that he's on the most dangerous road of the war, for the southern border, where South African troops are mobilizing to attack the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

Surrounding the ever-present dread of ambush is ominous si-

lence: "Every town in Angola looked like a ghastly, corroding movie set built on the outskirts of Hollywood and already abandoned by the film crew." When a Portuguese colonist returns from the border—his mother had refused to give up her bakery business and he wanted to bring her back some



flour—with the news that the South Africans are ready to strike, the reporter decides to make the hazardous journey back, to get the news to Luanda and the outside world. As light dawns on the road, meaning the end of ambush danger for the day, the military officer driving the jeep sighs with satisfaction: "Another day of life."

In Luanda, the abandonment and silence appear total. It appears that history has stopped. But when the reporter picks up the phone, he improbably gets a dial tone. The telephone becomes a trigger for the kind of aside that marks off *Another Day of Life* from journalistic adventure: "The concept of totality exists in theory but never in life," he writes. "Even if there's an ocean of evil around us, green and fertile islets will poke above the water.... That chink, that island, that branch sustain us on the surface of existence."

**Opulence of human fantasy:** After Kapuscinski delivers his news to Cuban advisers, he tries to bridge the gap between the image and reality of the Angolan war. Listening to international radio reports, he can't match them up with the fragile, ad hoc and deadly way that Angola is battling toward independence. "The world contemplates the great spectacle of combat and death, which is difficult for it to imagine in the end, because the image of war is not communicable—not by the pen, or the voice, or the camera. War is a reality only to those stuck in its bloody, dreadful, filthy insides," he decides. And when the press corps descends on Luanda, he doesn't waste time scorning the instant-coffee job his colleagues do on the brewing mess. All he'll say about their reports is, "I admired the opulence of human fantasy."

Penniless and cigaretteless (which, since cigarettes are functioning as cash, comes to the same thing), Kapuscinski leaves just as Angola inaugurates a new era. He gives us the denouement, the final retreat of the South African and defeated pro-South African rebel FNL and UNITA forces months later, as if he'd seen it, in one horrifying image. The South African soldiers are marching across the newly-reconstructed bridge, while rebels struggle, scream and some drown in the river below. "Passage across the bridge is for whites only," he acerbically concludes.

With an image like that, Kapuscinski doesn't have to spell out for you the issues, the sides, the implications in Angola. And that's how *Another Day of Life* works throughout. His introductory description of this book—"about being alone and lost"—has a truth to it. But Kapuscinski alone and lost rescues connections and finds a kind of knowledge we don't get from better-known, self-confident and satellite-fed voices claiming to make contact with unimagined others. ■

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IN THESE TIMES MAY 6-12, 1987 19



By Reebee Garofalo  
and Rick Dutka

## Rockin' the bureaucracy, riffing amid the red tape

**W**E WEREN'T SURE EXACTLY what to expect from East Germany's Rock for Peace Festival in January, but what we got was an escalating spiral of surprises. As we were ushered into the main concert hall to watch the set-up, the band doing a sound check was singing "Free Nelson Mandela" in English. It was only then that we learned that the theme for this year's festival was anti-apartheid. Since we are both involved in South Africa support work in the U.S.—and had been involved in the "Sun City" project with Little Steven—we felt a personal connection to the festival almost immediately.

Next we discovered that the "Sun City" video—in fact, the very dub we'd given to Germany's Humboldt University the previous year—would be the centerpiece of the opening night concert. This strange feedback loop was further amplified when we found to our amazement on reading the program that we were a scheduled event at the festival. There it was in black and white: "21.00 Uhr. Gesprächsrunde u.a. mit Reebee Garofalo, Rick Dutka, Dr. Peter Wicke." We had been scheduled to do a live national radio show on the making of "Sun City" at the festival that night. Had we only known a few months earlier, we might have been able to bring Little Steven, the writer and co-producer of "Sun City," with us. It seemed like the least we could do was to call Steven and get him to tape a message to the concert audience. Easier said than done.

The person who arranged the call was the third person on our radio panel, Dr. Peter Wicke, director of the Center for Popular Music Research at Humboldt University. He was our host, guide and the first of many rock'n'roll friends in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Wicke, with his flowing, shoulder-length gray hair, was able to move bureaucratic mountains, a feat that was all the more interesting in that he was virtually the only person we met at his level of status who was not a member of the Communist Party. Phoning Steven, however, tested even his mettle. "That call," he told us, "was more difficult to organize than the entire festival." **Like woodstock in D.C.:** So, what is this Rock for Peace Festival? Try to imagine the Recording Industry Association of America and the Boy Scouts co-producing the Amnesty International benefit in the House of Representatives. This is Rock for Peace. Or, at least, as close as you can come to defining it in Western terms.

The annual festival began in 1982 as a protest against the deployment of NATO missiles in Brussels. Each year since then the event has had

a political theme. The three-day benefit celebration in January featured 59 bands, mostly East German. This year the proceeds went to the African National Congress.

Like all events in East Germany, Rock for Peace is an official event. It is organized by three entities: the Committee for Entertainment Arts, Free German Youth and the Palace of the Republic. They begin the planning process with "loose discussions" fully six months before the event, according to festival organizers Detlev Haak and Michael Hoft. Literally hundreds of people are consulted about the organization and execution of the event. The process seems to have elements of democracy at its best as well as bureaucracy at its worst. Last-minute changes are not easily accommodated.

The festival is held in East Berlin

at the Palace of the Republic, which is also the headquarters for the East German Parliament. Security, needless to say, is a major concern. Squads of Free German Youth, looking like the Guardian Angels in their red berets, were amply supplemented by older, more ominous-looking plain-clothes professionals. We signed, carried and presented more official pieces of paper than we could ever keep track of.

Bureaucracy notwithstanding, the sixth annual Rock for Peace Festival was a colorful and engaging music and art fair. Thirteen different spaces in the Palace were allocated for musical performances, arts and craft exhibitions, mural painting and kinetic sculpture, records, souvenirs and other memorabilia. Among the audience of about 20,000 young people, mohawks, purple hair and

men with earrings were not uncommon. Tina Turner's frosted lion look was also very popular. The drab grays and browns of the prevailing Western stereotype of Eastern Europe were nowhere to be found at Rock for Peace, or anywhere else in Berlin, for that matter.

**The highest form of flattery:** Most of the festival's music was Western-influenced and largely derivative. In the foyer, the Jonathan Blues Band (named after the cat of the lead guitarist) played what their drummer called the "white blues." Zwei Wege (Two Ways)—referring to a combination of rock and folk. They reproduced Crosby, Stills and Nash harmonies note perfect. On their pro-ecology "Green Song," they also incorporated an effective blend of African percussion.

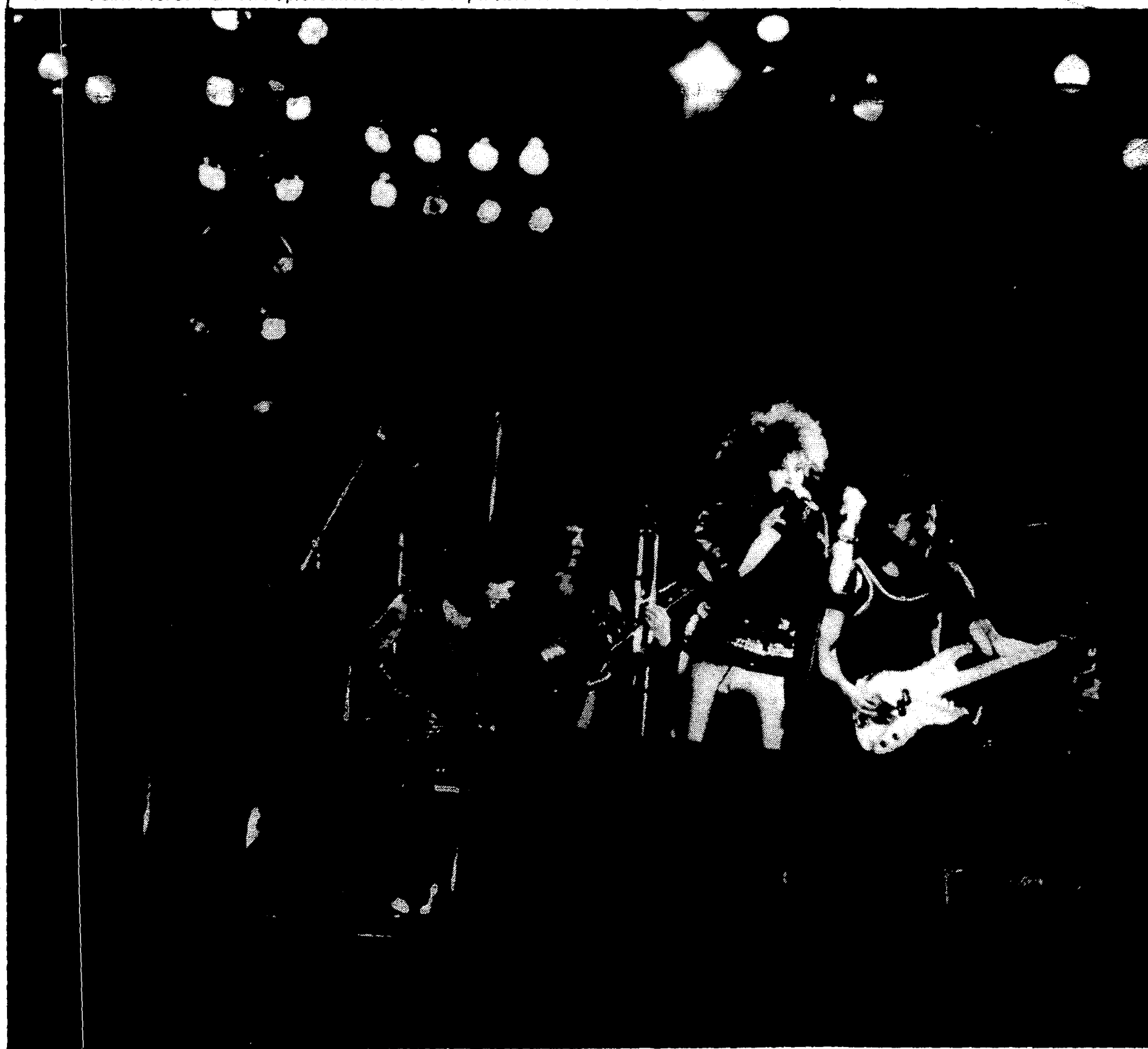
Vocalist Angelika Weiz—part German and part Puerto Rican—

opened the concert in the main hall with a lively version of "Ebony and Ivory." Karat, one of the older rock groups in the GDR, performed in the art-rock style of Pink Floyd. Reggae Play and Chicoree teamed up for a good-natured (if stiff) interpretation of "Get Up, Stand Up." Members of the groups City, Karat, Reggae Play and Pension Volkmann delivered a stirring rendition of "Biko" in German.

The mostly teenage audience in the 6,000-seat main hall was clearly a pop crowd. When Pension Volkmann, a folk duet, performed in the acoustic style of political song, many of the young people politely voted with their feet. And when German trombonist Conny Bauer joined forces with South African drummer Luis Moholo to play an avant-garde jazz set over a video of Winnie and Nelson Mandela, the audience came as close to rudeness as is culturally possible in the GDR. Which is to say they walked out a little more noisily. Chicoree's parody of old World War II German folk songs, on the other hand, was quite well received.

Following a performance by a

Back in the GDR: East German rockers prove that there's no Heavy-Metal curtain at the Rock for Peace Festival in Berlin.





vocal group from the African National Congress and a dance troupe from Mozambique, the "Sun City" video was shown on a 15-by-20-foot screen in the main concert hall. It was introduced by our tape-recorded message from Little Steven, which was simultaneously translated into German. The crowd loved it. Apparently, so did the rest of the country. The following day it was printed verbatim in a national newspaper and subsequently broadcast on national radio and television. The East Germans are hungry for information about the West.

This craving is understandable when one realizes that most East Germans have never been to Western Europe, let alone to the U.S. Travel to the West is forbidden. Consequently, there has been a running debate at Rock for Peace over whether to internationalize the event. While some officials argue that the festival should be preserved as the primary showcase for the national rock scene, there is no question that the fans would like to see a broader focus. When the British group Latin Quarter, one of two Western bands to appear at the festival, performed in the main concert hall, hundreds of teenagers

rushed to the stage as if to verify an apparition.

**Radio daze:** Then it was off to what we fondly remember as "The Wick and Weebie Show." A certain German pronunciation of our names often made us feel like we were being interviewed by Barbara Walters. Our radio interview took place in an open lounge area with a food bar on the third floor of the Palace. By the time we got there, hundreds of people had already positioned themselves on the floor in front of the stage. It felt like we were being treated as celebrities in our own right. We later found out that we were the first U.S. citizens ever to attend the Rock for Peace Festival.

From the festival's point of view, the radio show went fine, but afterwards we felt like it might have been more fun to challenge the audience, to open up a critical dialogue in a public forum. A rock festival somehow demands more irreverence than straight answers to straight questions. Which would have delighted our rock'n'roll interpreter, the freewheeling George Wolter, who never missed an opportunity to point up the folly of bureaucracy. He was hardly what we expected for our official interpreter.

Back down in the foyer, we were treated to what we considered the best performance by a band from the GDR. The envelope, please. The award went to the Blankenfelder Boogie Band, an ensemble whose core was the group Kerschowski. They did a rock'n'roll revival listed in the program as "A Wop Bop A Loo Bop A Lop Bam Boom." With altered lyrics and in German, they performed such classics as "Money," "That'll Be the Day" and "You're Sixteen, You're Beautiful and You're Mine." The word "competent" regularly comes to mind in describing East German musicianship, but seldom the word "inspired." Kerschowski was the first band we saw that had the ability to transform derivative material into something they could call their own.

Kerschowski also scored something of a political victory at the festival. "Mensch Junge," a song from their new album, tells of a journalist who distorts his coverage of domestic problems. Some officials apparently felt that the text was not appropriate for the festival. Kerschowski went to the barricades. They apparently threatened to cancel their appearance if they couldn't play the song. Whatever they did, it worked. On Saturday night they performed "Mensch Junge."

A few years back the group Pankow had the opposite problem. Pankow had written a song about the alienation of young workers that they were allowed to perform live but not record. There ensued a drawn out "dialogue" and eventually Pankow got the go-ahead to record, but not until the group had

already moved on to new material. The piece never saw vinyl. A spurious victory at the time, Pankow's struggle may have opened up new cultural spaces for groups like Kerschowski.

The group that really blew the festival crowd away was the other group from the West—Salsa Picante, a salsa band from West Germany. Bandleaders Mario Di-Cara and Roberto Herrador, originally from Argentina and El Salvador respectively, have lived in West Germany for years. The other dozen or so musicians in the band were Germans, but they cooked like Cubans. The reaction was astonishing.

Typically, the East German audience does not dance. In fact, they seldom so much as tap a toe. But when Salsa Picante heated up the sauce, they had the whole place hopping. It was like people had temporarily jumped out of their cultural skin. Naturally, we did our part. "I was told that you had a good time last night," said Peter Wicke first thing the next afternoon.

**Berlin—Saturday night's all right:** One highlight of that evening's show was the Gitarreros. They are sort of an East German all-star band built around the lead

That evening also saw the "Hit des Jahres" contest. The most popular record of the year is voted by the festival audience. Popularity in the GDR is an elusive concept. In a market economy, it's easy if unsettling. The group that sells the most records is the most popular. Period. But the GDR's economy is not based on supply and demand. A certain number of records are pressed for a given group, and if they sell out, that's it. There is simply no way of knowing how many records a group could have sold.

The East Germans look for non-commercial indicators of popularity that include qualitative judgments. While the attempt to address the qualitative dimension must be lauded, such evaluations are not easily measured and also raise the specter of censorship.

Dieter Gluschka, director of the Committee for Entertainment Arts, spoke in terms of "the effectivity of the music" and "the ability to move the masses," but he admitted that such definitions "present a problem for us." In the final analysis, the vote at the festival was probably as reliable as any other measure of popularity in the GDR. And it may actually play some role in shaping cultural policy.

**Literally hundreds of people are consulted about the organization and execution of East Germany's Rock for Peace Festival. The process seems to have elements of democracy at its best as well as bureaucracy at its worst. We signed, carried and presented more official pieces of paper than we could ever keep track of.**

guitarists from the top groups. For many, they are the pride of the national rock scene. To us, a phalanx of metal heavies pounding out chorus after chorus of "Layla" sounded at best anachronistic. Of course, we were listening through Western ears. "This music has a different meaning here," explained Wicke. "Historically, the music of the GDR is very asensual." The Gitarreros apparently represent one foray into what is considered to be a more or less unbridled sensuality.

No one we talked to, neither women nor men, thought of this music or the GDR rock scene in general as sexist. We were surprised, especially since we were told quite candidly by Wicke that "only about 5-10 percent of the rock musicians are women. They are mostly singers." (The main instrument that women play is, for some reason, the saxophone.) Women almost never play electric instruments. This is roughly the same pattern that has characterized rock music in the West. And it has only recently begun to change here.

This year the vote was no contest. Silly's "Bataillon d'Amour," a reasonably catchy pop-rock tune, won it in a walk. Silly had been one of the GDR's top groups in recent years. Interestingly, they didn't perform at the festival. In fact, a number of the top groups failed to appear this year. Official explanations about "other contracts" and the festival being organized too late did not paper over the resentment of the fans. A young woman accosted us in the hallway at an after-concert party and went on at great length about Silly. Her 20-minute assessment of lead singer Tamara Danz added up to the German equivalent of "she's an air-head." There seemed to be a fairly widespread feeling that Silly had gotten too big for their musical britches.

**Don't follow leaders:** The absence of some popular bands may be linked to larger problems. Most of the people we talked to were disappointed at the low level of enthusiasm for this year's festival. Obvious reasons like the worst cold spell in recent memory were real

enough. But as total explanations, they were convincing to no one. Concerned officials told us that there would be many meetings, both during and after the festival, devoted to this problem. Journalist Thomas Otto offered the most enlightening on-the-spot analysis.

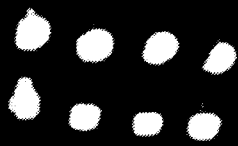
Recalling the feeling of the original 1982 Rock for Peace Festival, Otto explained: "the energy of youth was galvanized around external issues [which directly affected the GDR]." Since that time, the festival has continued to focus on external issues, but perhaps none that hit as close to home as missiles in Brussels. Two years ago the theme was Central America, and this year it was South Africa. These issues were perceived as important, but Otto felt a growing sentiment that the exclusive focus on external issues was diverting critical attention away from pressing domestic problems. "That energy is no longer good enough," said Otto. "Now we need to focus on internal issues to mobilize youth."

At the club Franz, one young man expressed his dissatisfaction in extreme terms. "I am an enemy of Rock for Peace," he told us. "They sing about peace, but there is no freedom. Without freedom there can be no peace." Such a position was rare. By and large, even the most critical people we talked to truly believed that they were living in a social experiment that had already established the economic and social preconditions for equality. (In the GDR education and health care are free, rent is a small percentage of one's income and many consumer items are readily available to everyone.) The nature of their criticism could only be characterized in Western terms as that of a loyal opposition. For them, the task was to make the institutions more responsive, more democratic and less restrictive.

They found themselves on the horns of a dilemma in that they sought answers from the very institutions they criticized. A few musicians complained to us: "This is not our festival. It is organized by the bureaucrats." The solution, however, was almost invariably to "find better leaders." No one had a conception of organizing the festival from the bottom up, even though everyone understood that the failure to do so meant that the bureaucracy would become that much more entrenched. We couldn't help feeling that they would do well to take a lesson from Mother Jones. Perhaps the theme for next year's festival could be: "Don't mourn. Organize!"

Reebee Garofalo is co-author of *Rock'n'Roll is Here to Pay: The History and Politics of the Music Industry*. He teaches at the University of Massachusetts in Boston. Rick Dutka is a co-coordinator of the Sun City Project. He is also vice-president of Tommy Boy Music and an associate director of the New Music Seminar.

## EAST GERMANY





# Sri Lanka

Continued from page 9

forges ahead with ambitious large-scale development projects funded by outside aid.

Sri Lanka has long been known as a kind of model in the developing world, boasting one of the highest literacy rates in Asia—86 percent—and a developed social welfare system. The country once held a strong leadership role in the Non-Aligned movement and leaders are clearly pained that the U.N. now ranks their nation with such countries as Iran and Chile for abuses.

**"The Tamil question":** Most concerns today rest squarely on resolving the "Tamil question." Although even some militants recognize a separate "Eelam" is not feasible, in the present war climate a de facto independent state already exists, especially in the Jaffna peninsula. Comparisons to Northern Ireland and Berlin frequently crop up, while in looking for a "lasting solution" observers make

an analogy with Switzerland and Canada.

"What we need is a kind of federal system, which allows for regional autonomy and recognizes different languages," says Jaffna lawyer R. Balasubramaniam. "The Sinhalese people are not our enemy, the enemy is the unitary constitution which gives power to whoever holds a majority. With 75 percent, the Sinhalese will always be that majority."

Balasubramaniam points to the past history of separate kingdoms prior to the European arrival, and to pacts made in 1943, 1957 and 1965 between Tamil and Sinhalese leaders that effectively acknowledged the north and east Tamil area as a separate linguistic and political unit. He says, however, that political pressures on the Sinhalese leaders always abrogated whatever agreements might have helped avoid the present crisis.

"After independence we thought the Sinhalese leaders (including Jayawardena) would rise above race, religion and caste, but with the unitary constitution they make

use of majority opinion to stay in power. But what right do they have to tell us how we should govern ourselves?"

How far Jayawardene is really willing to go is difficult to assess. His position is secure at least until 1989. Elections then could be postponed because of a constitutional provi-

sion allowing Parliament to vote changes in electoral rules.

All parties involved, including India, say negotiations are the only answer. But few expect the long nightmare to end soon. □

William Gasperini writes frequently for *In These Times*.

## Homecoming

Continued from page 24

the residential buildings and old hotels remind me of seaside England. A couple sidle up to us to comment on my presence. They look at me closely and I wonder, by the intensity of their stare, if their children, too, have left this lonely place. There are few blacks around.

The following day, we hear many rumors about trouble in the townships. My parents instruct me not to drive near Walmer "location," a squalid black neighborhood on the border of an affluent white suburb. Sylvia

does not come to work. We hear no news—except the smug voice of a government spokesman as he announces that the level of unrest has "stabilized."

**Disappointment in the dim light:** One night we meet friends at an Italian restaurant. We walk in expecting to recognize people, but both we and our audience are disappointed in the dim light. The waiter is black and does not write. We are silent as he memorizes our orders and suggests wine.

Inevitably the conversation lingers on politics and emigration. One friend argues adamantly that the way blacks kill blacks shows their struggle to be a hopeless farce. I think that he is speaking nonsense, but my disagreement is academic and feeble. I say that this revolution cannot be a democratic process when no one in the country has had any experience of that style of life. While I talk, the waiter brings dessert and my father changes the subject.

Michael arrives by plane for the last few days of my stay and I fetch him from the airport. The police stop me at the entrance and inspect the car. Moodily I drive in, indignant that I should be regarded suspiciously. As we remove Michael's luggage from the conveyor belt, an obviously foreign journalist packs his camera equipment onto a trolley. He is watched by a number of people, but seems oblivious to the less-than-friendly attention.

I devote one last day to shopping. On the way to a suburban mall, I pass through North End, formerly a bustling black shopping area. Now the boycott has suffocated business and the streets are empty. I see vacant shops, the futile "To Let" stickers already peeling.

Michael, my parents and I go to dinner to the "Belle" on my last evening. This time we meet many friends tucked into the restaurant's warm booths. Tonight the mood is light around our table. We are, for the moment, just a family, removed from context and time.

On the way out, a friend of my mother's tugs on my father's sleeve. She asks him what he could do on the ship. He looks at her quizzically. Laughing, she explains that since no country is willing to take them in, their table is considering the possibility of buying a ship and sailing, without destination, into the sun. Only useful people may come aboard.

**Taking flight:** My suitcases are in the car and I hug my mother. She will not come to the airport, and I worry about leaving her alone. This time there are no police at the entrance. Inside, I tell my father and brother to go home. Michael watches us anxiously as I hold my father. They leave and I stare blankly at the in-flight magazine all the way to Johannesburg.

This time I am less nervous at passport control. I lie almost absently to the official; I smile at her and walk on. On the plane I sit next to a black Anglican priest. The white steward tells us that he is a musician by profession but works on the airline because he cannot bear living in South Africa. The priest and I smile understandingly, he with his return ticket, and I on my way home. □

Allen Lesley is the pseudonym of a South African expatriate journalist now living in London.

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2. This offer is being made throughout the United States and is open to residents 18 years or older. Employees (and their families) of MOTHER JONES, affiliated companies or organizations, printing, production, distribution and sweepstakes agencies are not eligible. This sweepstakes is presented in conjunction with other mailing efforts and sweepstakes sponsored by MOTHER JONES and/or its affiliates. The prizes will be awarded from all entries received in this and other creative presentations of this sweepstakes by the sponsor and/or its affiliates. There will be only one winner of each prize in the combined sweepstakes except for the prize awarded to all claimants, which may vary in type from sweepstakes to sweepstakes but will not vary in value by more than fifty cents, up or down, from sweepstakes to sweepstakes.

3. To claim your prize without subscribing, send your name and address to Mother Jones Sweepstakes, P.O. Box 2014, Marion, OH 43302. Do not use the attached prize claim card or you will be disqualified.

If the attached form is missing and you would like to subscribe and/or enter the 2nd Decade Sweepstakes, please send a copy of this advertisement along with your name, address and subscription remittance to: MOTHER JONES MAGAZINE, Department LAD, 1663 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

4. All federal, state and local laws apply. Void where prohibited by law. Taxes are the responsibility of the prizewinners. No substitution for prizes.

5. All entries and claims for prizes for this sweepstakes must be mailed by December 31, 1987. Closing dates and methods of entry with respect to related sweepstakes may vary. Prizes not awarded due to non-claiming by recipient of winning numbered entry-forms may be awarded in a second-chance drawing from among all entries received. The completion date for determination of prizewinners will be June 30th, 1988 and all prizes will be delivered within 90 days of said date of completion. You may be eligible for more than one prize. Selections of prizewinners are conducted by an independent judge whose decisions are final in all matters pertaining to this offer. All cash prizes are awarded in a random drawing from among all entries received.

6. Winners will be notified by mail. For prizewinners' names, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope after the June 30, 1988 completion date to: Sweepstakes, MOTHER JONES Magazine, 1663 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.



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# C L A S S I F I E D S

## MUSIC

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## SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER AND ITS KLANWATCH PROJECT

Deputy Legal Director

### About the Position

The Deputy Legal Director's principal responsibilities will focus on legal research and writing. He or she will coordinate the work of legal interns, select and manage summer law clerks, oversee Center legal publications, develop and maintain liaisons with law school research organizations, review requests for legal assistance, and draft legal memoranda and briefs. The Deputy Legal Director will not have a separate caseload. Salary: competitive with federal government positions.

### Qualifications

Applicant must have superior academic qualifications, strong research skills, substantial experience drafting briefs and memoranda in complex federal court cases, and the ability to work as part of a team. Actual trial experience not required. Persons with varied backgrounds, including "big firm" and government experience, are invited to apply.

### About the Center

The Southern Poverty Law Center seeks to protect and advance the legal rights of the poor and minorities. Since its founding in 1971, the Center has handled numerous path-breaking cases concerning racism and violence, voting rights, employment discrimination, occupational health and safety, the rights of children and the handicapped, fair taxation, and the criminal justice system. Its nationally recognized Klanwatch Project monitors groups such as the KKK and combats their violent activities through litigation and education.

### How to Apply

Send resume, four writing samples, and a list of three references to:  
Search Committee  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
P.O. Box 2087  
Montgomery, Alabama 36102

Phone inquiries will not be accepted.

# LIFE IN HELL

## LIFE IN HELL

©1987 BY  
MATT  
GROENING

### 2 school I2 Hell\*

\*NOTE: GENERIC BACKWARDS "S" DYSLEXIC HUMOR, A COMMON SOURCE OF FRIVOLOUSITY

### LESSON 3: THE WILD, WILD WORLD OF KINDERGARTEN

REMEMBER: WHAT'S LEARN'T IN THE CRADLE LASTS TILL THE TOMB.

TOMB? TOMB? WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A TOMB?

### WHAT THEY DO TO YOU IN KINDY GARDER

FIRST, THEY MAKE YOU LEAVE ALL YOUR COOL SHINY WAR TOYS AND SEXY PLASTIC DOLLS AT HOME. INSTEAD, THEY GIVE YOU A BUNCH OF CLUNKY, DIRTY, WORN, BORING TOYS MADE OUT OF DUMB WOOD OR SOMETHING TRUE. THESE TOYS HAVE FASCINATING CHEN MARKS ON THEM, BUT THEY ARE REALLY REALLY REALLY REALLY REALLY HARD TO BREAK. OKAY, THEN THE LADY MAKES YOU DO STUFF LIKE MARCH AROUND AND SIT STILL AND SING SONGS AND LISTEN TO STORIES ABOUT BUNNIES. THE BUNNY STORIES CAN BE QUITE AMUSING, ACTUALLY. THEN YOU GO OUTSIDE TO PLAY. GO FOR THE SWINGS--THEY'RE THE FUNNEST. THEN IT'S BACK INSIDE FOR CRACKERS AND WARM JUICE. YOU CAN CAUSE A RUCKUS BY CALLING IT "WORM JUICE."

### KINNERGARDEN IS THE LAST PLACE YOU'LL BE ABLE TO ASK ANY QUESTION THAT COMES TO MIND WITHOUT FEAR OF GETTING SMACKED IN REPLY.

CAN DOGS MEOW?

IS UP DOWN?

IS TOMORROW TODAY?

WHY IS YOUR NOSE SO BIG?

### WARNING YOU MAY BE SMACKED ANYWAY.

WILL YOU BE DEAD WHEN I GROW UP?

IF GOD IS EVERYWHERE, IS HE IN THE TOILET?

CAN CATS OINK?

### BIG MEAN GROWN-UPS AND THEIR SNEAKY TRICKS

THEY WILL TRY TO GET YOU TO INCRIMINATE YOURSELF.

DID YOU BREAK THOSE BOTTLES?

NO!!!!

IT IS EASY TO SEE THROUGH THIS TACTIC.

BEWARE OF THEIR CRAFTY MANEUVERS. DON'T LET THEM CATCH YOU OFF-GUARD.

HOW DID YOU BREAK THOSE BOTTLES?

I PUSHED THEM OFF THE TABLE.

A COMMON BLUNDER.

HERE'S THE TRIED-AND-TRUE RESPONSE TO ALL BLAME-SEEKING QUERIES.

WHO BROKE THOSE BOTTLES?

HE DID!!!

SO KINDYGARTER IS FUN, EVEN THOUGH THEY DON'T HAVE ANY TV THERE AND THE BIG LADY TALKS TOO MUCH AND SHE PINS NOTES TO YOUR CLOTHES BECAUSE SHE THINKS YOU'RE SO STUPID YOU'LL LOSE 'EM ON THE WAY HOME. THE GOOD PART IS KINNERGARTEN LASTS FOREVER BUT THE BAD PART IS IT REALLY DOESN'T.

# C A L E N D A R

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for one insertion, \$30.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of ITT Calendar.

## CHICAGO

May 9

Come join DSA in celebration at this year's Norman Thomas-Eugene V. Debs 29th annual dinner. We will be honoring Jacquelyne Grimshaw, Director of the Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and Deputy Campaign Director; and Heather Booth, Co-Director of Citizen Action and founder of the Midwest Academy—major contributors to the re-election of Harold Washington. Lynn Williams, President of the United Steel Workers of America, will speak on the 50th anniversary of the Memorial Day Massacre of the Republic Steelworkers. Saturday, May 9, 1987; 6:00 p.m. Cocktails, 7:00 p.m. Dinner. For more info call the Chicago DSA office at (312) 384-0327.

May 11

A jazz blues party for the Crossroads Fund at Lilly's, 2515 Lincoln, featuring Erwin Helfer and the Chicago Boogie Ensemble, and David Hernandez and Street Sounds, 6-9 p.m. Celebrate another year of funding social change projects, and say good-bye to Jean Hardisty, who will be leaving Chicago. Tickets: \$30. Call (312) 987-0941.

June 13

Vietnam Veterans Against the War will be having their 20th Anniversary Reunion June 13 in Chicago, IL. All our members and friends who have worked with us on Agent Orange, Post-Vietnam Stress, and U.S. militarism are invited to renew friendships and hope. Call: (312) 386-1413 or 327-5756.

## BERKSHIRES

May 29-31

At the Berkshire Forum: Linda Burnham, of Marxist journal Line of March, analyzes today's feminist movement. For information about this and other stimulating weekends in a comfortable lodge in a lovely, unexploited corner of New England write phone Berkshire Forum, R.D.1, Box 124, Stephentown, NY 12168; (518) 733-5497.

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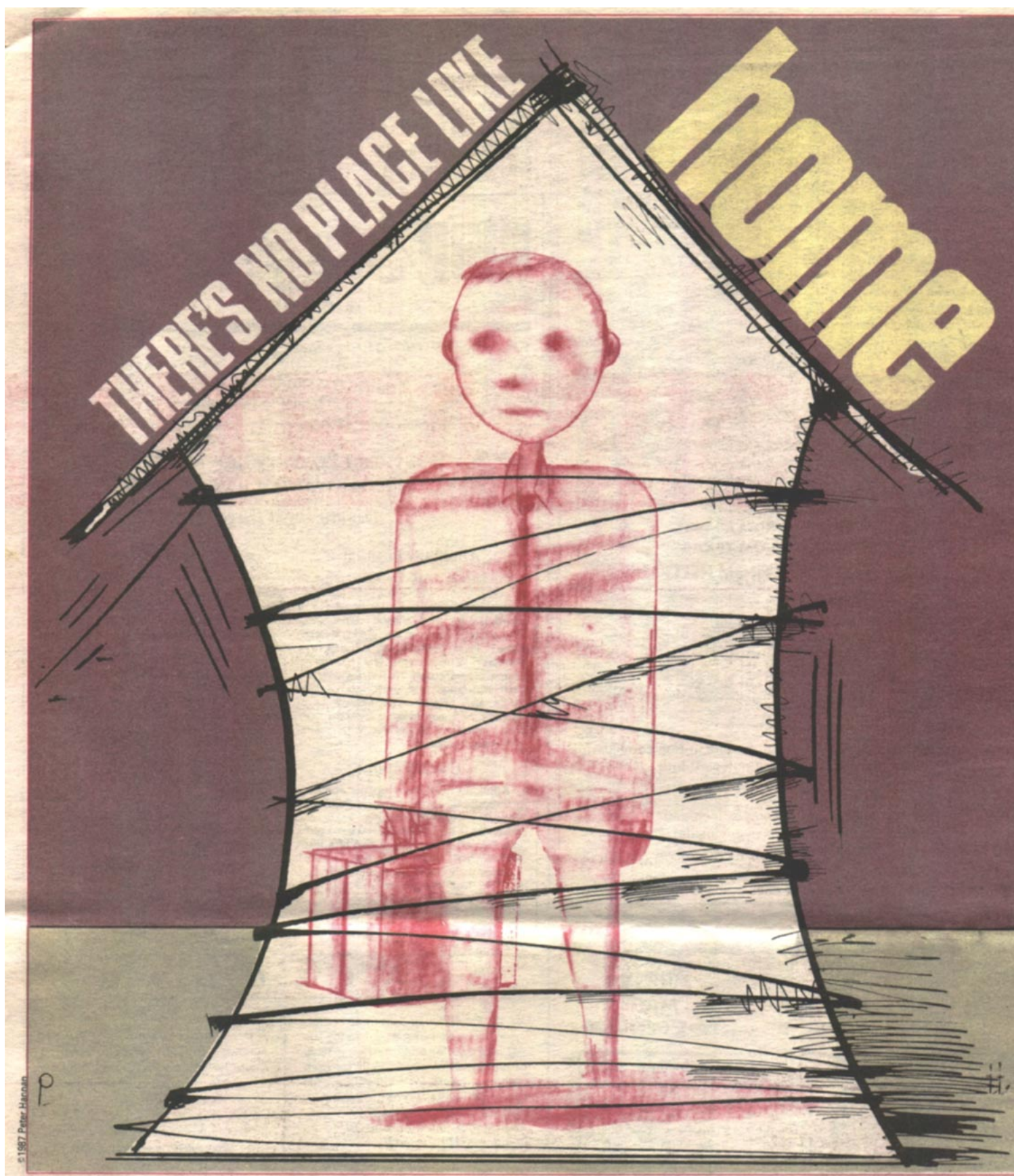
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and hairstyles are the same as those in London. I have planned to take advantage of the exchange rate, and my cousins watch as I begin my spree—buying in rands and thinking in pounds.

Tea on Sunday and my grandmother has invited close relatives to spend the afternoon with us. I am amused, bemused and angered by the conversation. It's all the same thing. The failing rand, stagnant trade, the dead property market.

Then I pick up on something more profound. It seems that the extreme right scares them more than the far left. Hilary, my mother's cousin, rants loudly about Terre-Blanche, an Afrikaner neo-Nazi leader whose charismatic style has startled the more placid English speakers. We laugh at her animated and colloquial eloquence, but everyone is concerned.

There is little mention of Mandela. Except when another voice complains about the expected black stay-away from work the following Tuesday. As if productivity was so high that workers could take a spontaneous holiday, someone says.

**Aerial view of apartheid:** Monday. I peer through the window as the plane rises steeply over Johannesburg's mine dumps. In the air apartheid is visible to those who wish to see it. A tight cluster of skyscrapers detail the horizon, white suburbs sprawl below. The houses halt in a line with some distance to cover before Soweto and other black townships begin. Inevitably, the immediate difference is one of color. Asbestos smudges and palls of smoke replace the rustic shades of white Johannesburg, and I follow the rows of block housing as they stretch into the pale veld.

Port Elizabeth has suffered more from the forces of change. My parents have gone beyond depression; they are resigned to what fate will bring. Everyone that I meet talks about boycotts and bankruptcies, and near my family's home I see a convoy of armored cars moving toward New Brighton, a large black area outside the city.

Until now I have not responded verbally to the South African environment. But on familiar ground, I tell my parents what I think. We do not argue—for the most part we agree on the injustice of apartheid, but my harangue torments and irritates them.

I am unable to sit in silence and absorb the government's propaganda on television. Sometimes it is so crude that it is blatant and defective. The news, however, is subtle, manipulative, and I cannot stand to watch my parents listen to the presenter's apparently civilized voice.

Sylvia, the family maid, is fond of me. I ask her about the situation in the townships, and she tells me about cross-fire in the night, "necklacing" and smoke bombs. I begin to understand her fear. The police terrify her, the implosive violence of "the children" completes the nightmare. She is convinced that she will die soon.

**Two ominous inertias:** I continue to tell my parents that they must leave South Africa. Their children have left and are leaving—estranged by the society, unwilling to endure the agony of a doomed *laager*. But it is hard to abandon all that is precious and familiar, to begin a new life in middle age. I struggle with their immovability against a background of political change. Privately, I find the paradox of the two inertias ominous.

It is customary in my parents' circle to walk along the beachfront on Sunday afternoon. We meet many acquaintances as we stroll up and down the pavement. Some of

*Continued on page 22*

## By Allen Lesley

**J**AN SMITS AIRPORT TO JOHANNESBURG. The flat grass ends at the gray tarmac as the plane slows to a halt. We walk out into the morning sun, past the smiling stewardess and down to the bus.

My anxiety weighs heavily upon me. I try to step firmly into the terminal building, but my anticipation of the passport official makes me trip frostily past the policeman at the door. I think how pasty and down his face looks.

Although it is five years since I emigrated from South Africa, I am still eligible for conscription. I am deterred from "call-up" only because I am still registered as a student. People tell me that there is no real cause for concern, that they cannot know that I am not a student at all. Still, my worry persists to the moment that my passport is stamped and returned to me.

My grandmother and brother Michael greet me warmly. I feel like a returning exile. We discuss London, the new job, the new life. Michael pays the parking attendant and I see that prices have really risen.

**Hitting the road:** We speed toward Johannesburg on a familiar highway, across the yellow veld, factories and low houses. I

breathe in the Johannesburg air, always sharp in my nose after a long absence.

My brother talks enthusiastically about his plans to emigrate from South Africa later in the year. He is full of options, considerations and opinions. But he knows little about the outside world, and his ideas sound brittle to me as I contemplate the back of my grandmother's head.

I ask about the family. Apparently, everyone wants to move to Australia. But who can sell a house today? I think, silently, that it must be especially bewildering for old people, white and black, to see the establishment crumble. My brother does not respond when my grandmother remarks disapprovingly about people running away.

She lives with my cousins in one of Johannesburg's northern suburbs. I am to spend the weekend with them and then fly on to Port Elizabeth to visit my parents. The houses in their neighborhood are large and sturdy, set firmly in gardens of roses, loquat trees and swimming pools. Outside, black servants sprawl languidly on the wide pavement. Lunchtime in suburbia.

**Come-and-go blues:** After we have eaten, my cousins, followed by my aunt, come flying into the house and into my arms. My aunt has been a teacher for more than 20 years.

## A homeward bound white South African discovers a homeland in bondage.

Out of earshot of my grandmother she tells me that she will not be able to continue in her profession in Australia—there are too many better-qualified teachers in Melbourne.

As we stand in the kitchen, Martha, the maid, appears at the door. She is dressed in her "uniform," a *doek* (head covering) and frock of the same blue linen material. There has always been a quiet guilt of communication between us. She greets me shyly, distantly, her eyes and set smile wishing the exchange to end.

The following morning the family goes to Rosebank, a large, plush shopping center nearby. Rosebank is packed with people. If Europe will not go to South Africa, then South Africa will go to Europe, because the fashions